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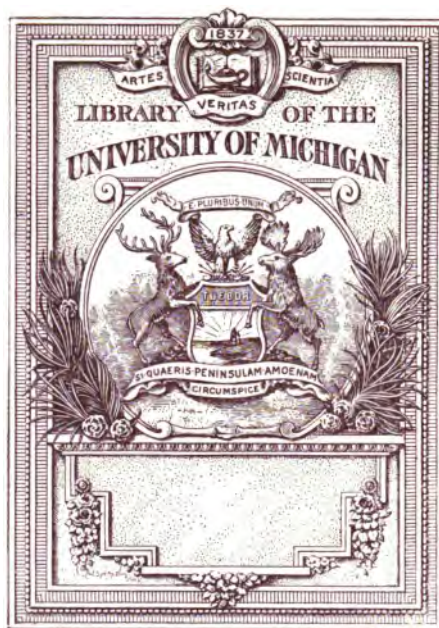
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~~THE GIFT OF~~

BERKELEY HALL LECTURES.

DELIVERED IN

BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS.,

BY

W. J. COLVILLE.



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ALL THINGS MADE NEW.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

We are assembled this morning, after our summer vacation, to resume our regular duties and our regular services in this city. It of course affords us the very greatest pleasure to behold so large a congregation, and to realize by your appearance, to say nothing of the thoughts and spirits that surround you and the spirit-influence that emanates from you, that you are glad to be in your accustomed places again, and to mingle one with another in the pursuit of truth. We desire to emphasize at the outset of this, our opening discourse to-day, the practical good which any public service can accomplish.

We may meet together at stated intervals in one place, but unless we meet with one accord we might as well remain outside the door, and perhaps better. We may go through all the forms and ceremonies of religious worship, we may unite our voices in prayer and praise, we may listen with the attention of the outward ear to some intellectual display of thought, or to some burst of fervid eloquence, and yet, returning to our various homes and places of business, we may discover that we have reaped no advantage; that neither ourselves nor our neighbors are any better for our Sunday worship. But if in all outward forms there exists a living soul; if the words which frame themselves upon your lips are spontaneously produced; if the soul's desire to elevate humanity causes your lips to move in grateful song, then no matter where or what your temple, no matter what the language on your lips, the soul's sincere desire surpasses expression, and the prayer and the life are beyond all forms in a liturgy. Our one great desire this morning is to make you all personally realize that you are

just as essential for the carrying out of the services here as we are who address you; you can benefit one another by mere spiritual contact; you cannot breathe the same atmosphere with another without impregnating that atmosphere with your own life, and, consequently, the desires in your minds, the purposes for which you are gathered together, are a mighty power within this place; even the atoms which compose all material things are filled with life, which is either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

This atmosphere of which you are all partaking, and which you are all assisting in forming, is part and parcel of yourselves, and upon it the very life of your soul is outgoing. This life goes down to succeeding generations with its baptism of inspiration, or with the reverse if your thoughts are not exalted; consequently going to church or assembling in a public hall is not the all-important thing; but the gathering together of minds that are as one in the pursuit of truth produces a new spiritual atmosphere; it evolves a condition on the earth enabling humanity to receive more light from higher spheres, and as soon as one soul on the earth is prepared to receive a truth, that truth is communicated.

And thus it is, whenever any new movement is started, whenever any new idea enters into society, it is opposed at the outset, but is afterwards accepted. You may wonder why there are so many minds to-day who are ready for the inspirations embodied in the New Testament, who are not ready for the inspiration of this hour. We answer that while the soul of truth is always the same, while truth itself never varies, its form and its measure are always accommodated to the state represented

by those who are addressed by it, and while no teachings can ever surpass in beauty the Golden Rule, the Sermon on the Mount, the New Commandment, or others of those sublime utterances of Jesus and other seers of antiquity, which are embodied in your sacred literature and which excite the admiration of all the world of thinkers, no matter by what different names individuals or sects may designate themselves, we realize that, in consequence of the inspiration of the past, you are ready for yet ampler inspiration to-day. Only the few, comparatively speaking, can receive very advanced truths; the masses are scarcely ready; Jesus, nearly two thousand years old, is regarded as God incarnate; but Jesus, at thirty-three years of age, was crucified by command of the Orthodoxy of his day.

Thus all discoverers, all inventors, poets, musicians, architects and painters, are venerated by the world at large only after their ashes have long been deposited in the earth and formed a part of the dust of the ground. When on earth, in the majority of instances, they lived in obscurity. Their works follow them; the posthumous influence which they exert is recognized by humanity, but their power while in the body is recognized only by the very few.

Why is it that the old musicians, the old painters, sculptors, theologians and philosophers, are to-day calling forth the honor and admiration of the world? Why is it that your thought is turned toward Egypt, Hindostan, Peru, China and Japan, rather than to the modern nations? Why is it that antique works of art are so eagerly sought for to-day and are so costly? Merely because they were the external forms of the inspiration of days gone by. Humanity unasked is always ready to appreciate eventually that which it has aforesaid condemned. They are the inspiration of this living present, not alone acknowledged by those who bear the name of Spiritualists, not alone acknowledged by those who profess acquaintanceship with modern mediumship, but expressing itself in the form of literature and in all the improvements in trade, industry and government. Yet a surpassing life, a grander ministry, is not to-day acknowledged by the majority, but only by the minority. It ever will be so. There are those in your midst whom you know not of; those who have never left the bosom of their private families; who have never appeared in any public capacity; who have never given their works to the world; who are beyond Angelo, beyond Raphael, beyond the disciples of Jesus, only the world is not yet prepared for these sublimer exhibitions of the soul.

Is it to be supposed that art will stand still, that music will never advance, that philosophy

and poetry have contributed all they have to give to the world? Will there not be in future more perfect manifestations of beauty, and will not this earth and all its inhabitants become more and more ready for supernal inspiration and more conversant with its source? "Behold I make all things new." The angel of the earth is ever proclaiming these words. In all periods of history some gifted ones arise who are scoffed at, whose inventions are discredited, and whose inspirations are regarded as pernicious, even satanic; but the day comes when these same prophets are regarded verily as the gods themselves; it is the destiny of the very greatest minds to be first despised and afterwards worshiped by the adoring multitude. Even is it so at this hour: entering into the spirit of this age is an utterly new life, an altogether new philosophy, an entirely new art, a completely new religion; and yet in all this newness all ancient grandeur is represented; even as many streams may flow separately until they lose themselves in one mighty current, just as many rivers having their sources in various springs may flow through divers tracts of country until they are lost in one great ocean, so all that the past has had is flowing from various directions into one common stream to-day. All the powers of ancient peoples are being brought to a focus, and the new era now commencing is a benediction for all nations, not for one or a few; the concentrated fullness of all periods of enlightenment, not of one or of a few only.

You will observe, if you are at all acquainted with history, as undoubtedly all of you are, that whenever an empire is overthrown, a continent rejoices; that whenever a local civilization passes away the earth becomes more civilized, on account of the withdrawal of high pressure from certain quarters. Can you say that Egypt is dead? Every thought which was wrought in pyramid, in obelisk and temple, abides in your midst to-day. Every book in the Alexandrian library, over the destruction of which so many tears have been shed, is alive in the living spirit. Every thought which has been chiseled into form in the exquisite statuary of Greece or Rome is to-day working out a more perfect form through the instrumentality of living sculptors, only sometimes you perceive it not, and are not aware of its further attainment.

We desire to give this thought unto this age, that the skepticism of to-day is an absolute necessity. In order that all things may be made new we are obliged to turn our eyes away from those former centres of inspiration upon which we have long gazed admiringly. If any imagine that the religion of Jesus is at a discount to-day, they are altogether mistaken. If any imagine that the foundations of truth, which underlie Christianity, are being shaken,

they are altogether wrong. For the most part Agnostics are as earnestly desirous of enlightening the world upon all moral questions as are the most conspicuous minds in the ranks of liberal theology. Many who verbally deny God only deny his personality, only deny that peculiar manifestation of God which is dear to a certain class of intuitionists, and only deny that there can be revelation in the arbitrary sense of the term. Ingersoll, Charles Bradlaugh, and others of the extreme infidel type, are all in their way and according to their ability, insisting upon the gospel of Jesus. All who wish to do unto others as they desire others to do unto them are raising mankind to perceive that the liberalization of thought and the enlightenment of the masses is the one great need of the day; all unseen by them are loving spirit-forms prompting them to high endeavor; all unknowingly to themselves do they become at one with those inspired teachers of days long gone by, who, under the lead of the Messianic angel, are now paving the way for the advent of the age of harmony.

We must make room in our ranks for all classes of thinkers and all classes of workers. We must make room for missions in which many may be engaged, and instead of requesting all to unite under our shibboleth, we must rather leave technicalities and speculations for individual adjustment, while we unite collectively in the grand work of human enlightenment. "That ye love one another" is the great commandment; a commandment that can only be obeyed in the pursuit of all that pertains to human interests. "Love one another" is ever the new commandment, and that this may be obeyed human nature must be studied and comprehended, and human wants must be administered unto. Now in this new era which is commencing, and in which all earnest workers are called by unseen powers to take part, we shall witness a revival of all ancient art and all ancient knowledge. The sublime philosophies of Greece will be resuscitated and rendered practical. From the depths of Central America, as well as from the tombs of the prophets and the splendors of the Orient, we shall gather materials for the beginning of an era in which all dry bones shall be converted into living shrines for truth. This revival is alluded to by Ezekiel; the dry bones seen by him in vision are forms and ceremonies which had become materialized, prophets who had lost their spirit of prophecy, and remained among the people as enemies rather than as friends of the living power of the spirit. Old truths are to be revived under the administration of new prophets, and the glory which is to come to the earth will consist in the awakening of all peoples, until all shall show forth the power of the spirit. In anticipation of this glorious new era Swedenborg has told you of

the celestial sense of the word; he only claimed when on earth to unfold the spiritual. May there not be a line of light from the sphere of Swedenborg yet to come? If unto the church of the new Jerusalem on earth there may have been granted a partial opening of that inner meaning of ancient records, may there not be also a fuller revelation of the inner meaning? Do we not find among many others, as well as among Swedenborgians, an attempt to explain truth spiritually? So soon as man is ready for deeper meanings he will receive them. As soon as one soul is prepared to devote its entire energy to the pursuit of truth, unto that soul will be given just so much as that spirit can possibly use in the dissemination of truth.

What, we ask, will be the new church? All things are being made new. Will that church ever be circumscribed? Will it ever have any creed? Will men, women and children ever arrive at a point where they intellectually agree? They may, millions of years hence; they may in some far distant region, altogether beyond the realms of time and sense, but that they ever will on earth as long as the world is as it is, or as long as human beings are unfolding, is an impossibility. Do you realize that uniformity would be your curse? Do you realize that the various interpretations of *truth* which are given by various schools of thinkers, are as necessary as are various kinds of food? Do you realize that there are those who require milk, and others who need meat? Many minds can no more extend to the furthest point of inspiration to which you can reach, than the reindeer can live in the tropics, or the lion in a wilderness of polar snows. Can you not perceive that all these clashing sounds, all these varied voices of to-day, are portions of nature's universal symphony? All souls are striking their own peculiar notes, and as the whole harmony is not yet evolved, that inconsistency which you regard as a discrepancy in spiritual revelation, is in itself a needful portion of the whole? Often only one note is struck, or two or more at the same time, which need to be heard with others in order to produce harmony; thus outwardly teachings do not harmonize to-day. Philosophies are portions of the wonderful puzzle which humanity is called upon to put together; while some of the blocks are already in their places, others are missing, and you must make room for new ideas to fill the vacancies. In the spiritual enlightenment of this age, spiritual teachers are all inspired to give you to the extent of your ability to receive, and never beyond it.

Why do we make these remarks to-day? Emphatically because we desire it to be distinctly understood at the outset of this season's work that we desire to conflict with none; and if at any time in the statement of our positive con-

victions we are obliged to clash with other systems of thought, we wish you to accept everything for yourselves only as it appeals unto your own sense of right.

Now there are certain statements which are made from certain inspired quarters which are of a positive nature, and truthful intelligences will never assure you that they have seen and experienced this, that or the other unless they have positive proof, if they bring with them the credentials of honor. You may go to another school or medium and the answers you will receive in response to questions of an abstruse nature will be ambiguous; a doubtful atmosphere will prevail, and instead of the plain outspoken statement, "I know that it is so," or "I know that it is not so," you will receive merely the expression of an opinion, the limit of an individual investigation. "I am not sure, but I think this or that." "I have no knowledge of this or that subject, for it is not given unto me concerning it." Where is the discrepancy?

From one source you may derive instruction given unto minds ready to receive positive declarations, and from another you will receive only a dubious statement. Enter a Unitarian church to-day, and you will find that the majority of preachers who are drifting away from conservatism are relaxing into skepticism. Ask the majority of liberal Christians at this hour, and they will tell you that immortality is a beautiful hope, and that the future life is a large possibility; that it is even a great probability; but any positive declaration of immortal life is altogether denied to congregations by the majority of the advanced preachers of to-day. They may say that they believe in immortality, but at the same time they acknowledge that they cannot prove their belief. There are many who hope it is a truth, but with all this expression of hope there is no positive declaration. Why is it? Surely because all things are being made new in the religious world, and because the grounds for belief in immortality are altogether changed, the aspects of such questions are altogether altered. And those ministers who have proceeded from Orthodoxy into radicalism have been obliged to give up one by one the arguments which they formerly employed, and now they are drifting upon a sea of doubt. Their old arguments they can use no longer; their old fastnesses are no longer fit hiding-places for their souls.

What, then, is their work, but to stand and gaze until some new light comes to them to open their hearts and minds to the reception of the new life? We prophesy that before seven years shall have passed away—certainly before 1890—spiritual manifestations will occur in Unitarian and other churches; that side by side with ministers in the pulpit and congregations of truth-seekers in the pews, will

be seen angelic forms filling the places of earthly instructors, and demonstrating clearly the reality of spiritual existence. We are assured that in those churches where skepticism seems to be rampant, and tender hearts are being wounded day by day as they listen while their religious beliefs are being assailed, there is frequently the strongest desire for freedom and absence from restraint and a willingness to give up all in the pursuit of truth. These very questionings are some of the most favorable conditions for the reception of a new inspiration for a new life. Those who seem to you to be drifting furthest away from the spirit, are leaving their incumbrances and yielding to the spirit. There is no verbal acknowledgment to which the heart does not respond. The old conception is overcome, and the coldness of the consequent skepticism is a passage-way between the door of the darkened chamber of superstition and the brighter room which is filled with light and beauty.

You discover that to-day almost all evidences of immortality are being assailed. You read that the disciples of the New Era are subjected to many oppressions in countries which boast of their civilization. Beware of being altogether too severe in your denunciations of those working apparently against the dawning light; they are sometimes working for it, though not in your way, and probably not in the best way. Men have accepted on trust too long, and have yielded their souls to others until they are sick at heart. They have accepted the *ex-officio* declarations of the churches until they are now impatient of all religious restraint. Do you wonder that, in their resolution to be free, they will test, and scrutinize, and investigate every new appearance, until they are certain that it is founded upon the rock of truth? Very often those whom you regard as enemies of the truth are so earnest in their pursuit of it that they throw aside all restraints and all propriety in their determination to get at facts. Very often those who seem to lend their support to old institutions are so utterly disgusted with them that they will not be captured in the trammels of any new system until they have proved that it is able to withstand all assaults. Instead of the charity which thinketh no evil, do we not often employ the malice which thinketh all evil? Let us resolve that whatever may transpire, and whatever attitude may be assumed toward us, or toward any body of people by others, that we will put the most charitable construction upon the motives and actions of our antagonists, realizing that in this transitional age we must submit all things to a thorough sifting before the materials can be collected for the formation of the new temple of justice. There are those to-day who are afraid to investigate modern spiritual phenom-

ena; these are moral and intellectual cowards. There are others who are afraid of submitting to investigation; these are they who are not sure of their own rectitude. But outside of these two classes there are those who shrink from no opposition and no scrutiny; and these are they who are the living members of that new Temple which is even now being erected.

Of what will the new Temple be composed? Will it be fashioned of those precious stones which are mentioned in the concluding chapters of the Book of Revelations? Will the pavement of that new city be altogether of pure gold? Will there be no external luminary enlightening it? Interpreting the Apocalypse spiritually, the golden floor signifies the solid foundation, the rock of truth; that precious material, noble intention; the jewels, in all their varied beauties, in all their brilliant splendors, are the varied virtues and qualities of mind and soul which are to be united in the Temple, and the mystical number, the one hundred and forty-four thousand, signifies completion; a multiplication of the number twelve, which signifies entirety itself, twelve thousand times; this numeral, in ancient symbolism, signifies even to eternal completeness, beyond all limits of finite understanding; thus when you are told of the one hundred and forty-four thousand being gathered out of all nations of the earth, when you are informed that the number of the redeemed can thus be set down in figures, you must remember that figures are older than words, and far more universally understood, and that they were employed in order to give the idea of an inconceivable number, great beyond the conception of human thought, even reaching out into eternity.

When we remember that at this present hour, from every quarter of the globe, information is being received from sources long unknown, we find that all religions have essentially taught one thing—that all have started at one point, and all are traveling toward one destiny.

Why is it that all ancient religions are now being looked into? Why are we not content with the Bible alone? Because no longer is it possible for us to persuade ourselves that all are savage and heathen who are outside of our sanctuary. What occasions this revolution? Is there no power behind the throne swaying the human intellect? The power of this civilization is derived from those who formerly lived in the lands whither your attention is now turned, and who were the inspirers of the olden days, who have fulfilled their missions in certain localities, and are now giving wider range to their power. Brahmanical, Buddhistic, Egyptian, Persian and other heavens are now being disintegrated, and with this departure of souls into wider fields the limited societies of souls, which have long overshadowed the earth, and

have inspired man in special directions, but which are now being utterly revolutionized, no longer support cliques and organizations on earth, but rather regard the general wants of humanity; we find, therefore, that the commingled knowledge of the teachers of various systems, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and all other systems, will remain upon the earth, while the systems may fade, as distinct organizations, but only just so quickly as those souls who have found in these systems their highest light are ready for greater enlightenment.

Just so long as those who have passed out of the earthly form are hovering over the earth and take an interest in one special spot, working for one special idea, will limited systems continue to flourish on earth; but as soon as these spirits enter more universal states, then will transpire the overcoming of all exclusive systems in the world. Then will clans and cliques be shivered into fragments, for the new temple will contain all there is of truth in Brahmanism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and every other system which has ever emanated from the mind of man aided by inspiration. We desire to deliver this message to the Christian world. The existing churches are to be removed only to make room for freer and larger churches. Christianity must be stretched in order to admit the larger spirit which Jesus promised, and that in no sectarian sense. Christianity has to be enlarged to accommodate the advancement of those intelligent minds who have been its founders.

What of the Jew? So far as he is connected with Orthodoxy, is expecting a Messiah to descend from that little heaven which presides over Jerusalem, those spirits which surround him in all his ramblings imagine that one great Master-Soul will arise and rebuild the Temple, gather together the scattered tribes, and make the Jewish people the rulers of the earth. But is not the spirit of liberty encroaching rapidly upon Jewish conservatism? Jews are becoming daily more and more ready to think well of others, and to welcome them gladly as brothers. The Jews have been persecuted cruelly, and the effects of this persecution have largely overcome in them the desire to persecute others. Orthodox or conservative Jews are looking for the reestablishment of Judaism; it will probably never come, they will wait in vain. Judaism is of the past, and instead of a reunion, there will be a wider dispersion of its tribes. But to the liberal Jews, who are expecting a spiritual, rather than a personal coming of the Messiah, unto those Jews who acknowledge that they are divinely commissioned to bless the world through their wanderings—unto those Jews, we say, You will realize the consummation of your hopes, the crown of your expect-

tations; glory is in store for you, for unto Palestine (even Palestine in its earthly meaning) will there gather a concourse of intelligent minds directed by the overthrow of the Mussulmans and the disbandment of the Ottoman Empire. These may erect a new temple in Jerusalem.

The Jews will be directed toward their own land, being impelled by the law of attraction, as certainly as the needle is drawn to the magnet; they will see that as individual souls, aided by their ancestors enlightening them constantly, they have a new work to commence. But what will this Judaism be? It will not be restrictive Judaism, it will be a cosmopolitan religion. It will not be ancient Judaism, it will be advanced theism. It will not be the worship of the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob only, but of the God of all people. Those who are familiar with current Jewish literature and the sermons of modern Jewish rabbis know that the most advanced theist can hardly go beyond the advanced Jew in his broadest conception of God. We are always limited when we confine ourselves to deistic manifestations, but when we leave the triangle for the circle, bidding farewell to cross and crescent, going beyond symbols to the soul, we are all at one.

The liberal Jew of to-day says, "God loves every one; but God has called me to take his love in a peculiar way unto my fellow-man. God loves all the nations, but I have been called to manifest that love." And as the Jew speaks only in this wise in his liberality, so does he become one with those mighty heroes of every age, who, in their moments of ecstasy, have lost sight of nationality and of race in the interest of all humanity. It appears that in the Orient in very ancient times Brahmanism was simply an abstract metaphysical system, adapted only to the comprehension of those few minds who could in mysterious ways acknowledge that the soul of the universe pervaded all things, and that it was not necessary for spirit to be individualized; and that as to eternity, the soul had existed forever, and after going through a ceaseless round of probationary experiences would return to its source and be taken up by the spiritual universe as a drop in the fathomless ocean of spiritual being. It lost its individuality, they taught, only as the drop or the sand-grain lose their individuality. The theory of the individuality of the soul, according to the most ancient Orientals, was that you do not lose individuality in reality, but that you lose it in appearance; not that the soul ever loses individual consciousness, but that it becomes so united with other souls that there is one consciousness and one soul and one life and one wisdom, this being all-pervading.

Every drop is individual, every sand-grain is

individual, every atom in your body is individual; but can you dissect your body to your liking? Can you perceive where one atom begins and where another atom ends? The perception of anatomists is never a perfect perception. The exalted teachers of the past understood that at some time or other all souls would become so perfectly one that there could be no defect in their assimilation, all having one will and all doing one gigantic work.

Buddhism started with Brahmanism. Edwin Arnold, in his sublime poem, "The Light of Asia," does not attempt to describe the original Buddha, but deals with Sakya Muni Gautama, who lived about 550 B. C. He was to Buddhism very much what Luther was to Christianity, and was regarded by his disciples as the last incarnation of those angels, who are sometimes regarded as manifestations of Vishnu, the second person in the Oriental Trinity. Buddhism is simply the realization of the divine life manifested in human forms. This was a departure from the metaphysical into the practical, so that men failing to comprehend the infinite and great oneness of all souls, might, through human embodiment, behold the lustre of the infinite life, shining upon them in such mild radiance that the light would illumine rather than blind. All systems of religion which have acknowledged various deities bringing about evil and good on the earth, respectively acknowledge a surpassing good, and teach that unto that good all shall ultimately attain. The Parsee every day, when attiring himself, utters, if he performs his devotions as they are prescribed for him, "Death and hell and all evil shall be destroyed in the resurrection." The Siamese taught that future punishment was only to last a thousand years. Among the Jews, the word translated in the New Testament everlasting, meant only "long enduring," and among primitive Christians no other thought ever permeated the early theology culled from the teachings of Jesus, than that all were destined some day to be one with God even as Jesus was one with God, and as his disciples were one with him. This soul of religion is what we need to-day, and this is taking form even in restricted localities, a portion of light being now granted unto all sects. As light of a blue ray shines in the turquoise, as light of a red ray shines in the ruby, as all jewels contain imprisoned radiance, as one gem imprisons one ray, another another, so all the systems of the world, all philosophies, have been like jewels which have imprisoned portions of God's light, and as soon as these portions are liberated and unite, and our eyes no longer turn toward limited centres, we will see that glorious concord of color, the radiance of the effulgent glory of the universe in the love and wisdom of all united souls.

"Behold, I make all things new." There are

those who speak of Modern Spiritualism as being identical with primitive Christianity. This cannot be, as every age has its special ministry. If Jesus has done no good at all, if his work has been utterly useless, and if two thousand years of human experience have counted for naught, then we will set up primitive Christianity as the ultimate. But if it has done any good, if Jesus has been a vitalizing power, then primitive Christianity to-day is two thousand years behind the time. Not because we have outgrown Jesus, but because we have outgrown the intellectual calibre of his time, not the spiritual beauty of his teachings; we have outgrown the conditions which compelled him to speak in parables. If we wish to everlastingly perpetuate secret societies, like those of the Odd Fellows and Free Masons, we are virtually lagging behind the car of progress. In our desire to transcend them, we show that we are acknowledging that they have so far blessed mankind that they are no longer necessary; the world having improved under them, can do without them. If it had not been for them, perchance this enlightenment of the race would have been impossible. They were good; they are good; but as they become better and better, and as society becomes better and better through them, so will they be no longer needed. The same remarks may be applied to the standards of morality which you gather from the pages of the Bible; because that book contains so much that is pure and elevating, the time will come when the Bible will no longer be needed as a text-book. For as the scholar does not always need the schoolmaster, so we shall not always need the means which have been employed to bring us into something higher than a rudimentary class. There are within the Bible truths which can never be surpassed; there are words there, and there is a soul there, which strikes to the very root of all reform, and which to every man, woman and child is the highest possible inspiration. While in days gone by men had to learn from the Bible, ministers have been obliged to expound it from the pulpit—the book in which the people believed, enforcing moral commands; penalties for disobedience to divine laws were necessary when they were uttered by the teachers of old; the day will dawn when all these outward teachings will be superfluous, because the human soul, having unfolded, will then perceive in itself what it formerly gathered from outside sources; all of the virtue and intelligence manifested through the teachers of old will be in you, constituting your own moral sense.

Felix Adler tells us that to-day we can do without the Bible; that this hour of enlightened judgment is ready for something higher. If this be so; if we are ready to do without it; if the Bible has been circulated among the mil-

lions for centuries, these statements may be a crown placed upon it, an acknowledgment of the good that it has done. If there had been no good influence emanating from it the world would never have been prepared to go without it or to go beyond it. If you had never sent your child to school, he would have remained in ignorance, but if the schoolmaster was faithful, and the child learnt rapidly, he soon became able to study alone; he enters into a vital union with the schoolmaster; being in his sphere, he no longer needs to go to school to be enlightened by his former teacher, the results being sufficient. And so, if there be any possibility of passing any inspired form in church, or in the Bible; if there be in society a power to go higher, it is because of the truths which have been learned, and which have leavened humanity. There are souls as much beyond the ordinary revelation of truth perceived to-day as were the most spiritually-minded followers of Jesus beyond the rabble who preferred Barabbas to the great reformer. There are many here at this hour who are silent workers, paving the way for the new fraternity, who can rise to such sublime conceptions of life that were they to voice their thoughts they would be regarded as insane. Every man, woman and child must have each his own place. We must employ no word of condemnation for those who work in other fields than those in which we are called to labor. The knife was never intended to do duty for the hatchet, nor is the mowing-machine ever required to do duty for the thrasher. We must all fill our own places, and in those places can we alone succeed. Let us remark in conclusion that in bringing about a new era the work of the spirit-world is not iconoclastic, so much as it is constructive; it is ever constructive rather than destructive. The unkind abuse of a church is liable to do harm—certainly it can do very little good. Picking flaws in other people is certainly not a necessary means of improving yourselves. Let all iconoclasts remember that in proving others are wrong they do not necessarily prove themselves right. You may prove that the minister of some Orthodox church is in error. He may be wrong in one direction, and you may be wrong in another.

We cannot unite on a negative platform; we cannot unite on the grounds of that we do not believe. If we have any substantial platform, it must be a platform of facts. We must unite in positive affirmations, not in blind negations; and if there is any work before Spiritualists to-day, it is the work of accumulating evidence which will go toward furnishing facts for the digestion of the public.

It must be in this way that we build up the truth, and if our truth cannot conquer by exhibiting its own intrinsic value, then it fol-

lows what we have regarded as true is simply a delusion. If the people are to be led away from their idols, it must be through the power of fact clearly demonstrated, rather than through the force of denial. This is an age of affirmation, of positive declaration; this is an age for the sword of truth to carry all before it by its own unassisted power, until by its undimmed radiance it shall have put all darkness to flight. "Behold, I make all things new." So say the angels who are guiding the revolution in society to-day. Even so says the Infinite Spirit, organizing all things, destroying nothing. As from the materials which once formed long-destroyed worlds, your own earth is composed, and as to-day your earth is going forward to a destiny in which it will lose its individual form, and its materials be employed in the evolution of new systems, even so in the realms of religious thought and philosophy, all the old materials are to be newly combined. Knowledge is to come from all quarters; rays of light are to be brought to a focus until a new and powerful light, to lighten all nations, will be the result. The new man and the new woman and the new child are not to be of a new species, belonging to another order of beings, but only human beings more fully perfected; with characters like your

own, but more beautifully expressed; with minds and bodies more symmetrically unfolded. Out of all conflicting ideas in the world of human literature and of human art there will come forth an expression far beyond the highest of the already existing schools, unlimited powers of advancement being enshrined in the human mind.

Let the new temple be formed, and the new church will be a collective treasury of all that in the past was good, with the addition of more light and a more perfect charity. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." New! some may exclaim. Why, it is as old as humanity! Truth is ever old as God, but its new revelations are responses unto the ever-growing demands of ever-advancing minds. The new religion and the new philosophy, the new science, the new literature, the new art—these will simply be embodiments and extensions of all ancient treasures; the great triumph of the spirit consisting in the fact that whereas the recipients of inspiration were in a minority in ancient times, inspiration and its glorious results will ere long be shared by every dweller on the planet. Let us all resolve to do our part in bringing about this glorious consummation.

WHY WAS OUR PRESIDENT TAKEN AWAY?

A TRANCE DISCOURSE, DELIVERED BY SPIRIT E. H. CHAPIN, THROUGH
THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

INVOCATION.

Our Father and our Mother God, thou Infinite Spirit who dwellest in the heavens, we rejoice to-day in the midst of universal sorrow that, guided by the intuitions of the soul and the light of inspiration, we can find thy dwelling-place, the true kingdom of heaven within each pure, aspiring breast. We need not scale the mountain, descend into the valleys, or cross the ocean's briny deep to find thee, the Universal Parent, or to search out a resting place for the weary spirit, for thy love abideth everywhere; thy wisdom guideth all the events of human life; thy tenderness and concern for the welfare of all thy children is matchless beyond the power of thought or speech to describe. A nation mourns to-day because its chosen representative is laid low; a world is in sorrow because a ruthless hand has dealt the fatal blow which caused a vallant hero to fall by the wayside in the battle of life. Some of thy children cannot see anything of thee in this calamity; they cannot realize that thou livest and orderest all things for their good, and thus their unbelief adds to their sorrow. Their doubt increases their grief, for, failing to repose in the assurance of thine infinite kindness, they acknowledge to themselves the dread existence of a malevolent spirit of darkness.

Oh! wherever hearts are crying out in their grief because any dear one is taken away, may the angels of consolation who demonstrate the blessed fact of human immortality, be ready with their healing balm. Not only for the widow and orphaned children of our departed hero do we pray, but for the sad and afflicted everywhere. While our heart's most fervent aspirations arise on behalf of our President's stricken family, we pray that our sympathies may be so enlarged that we may strive in every act of daily life to lighten the burdens of the weary, and cheer with practical effort the pathway of the sad; and for this great and powerful land we crave the boon of true spirituality. We long to see all her children truly free. We long to see each individual member of this nation acknowledge his own responsibility as a free-born man having a voice and influence in all affairs of State, not leaving to a governing body the work of improving society, but

setting about it earnestly himself, commencing to regenerate the world in his own home and his own person.

If the outward service of our President is ended, we know that his spirit lives and works, more powerful, unfettered, glad, triumphant; we can experience the blessings which flow to us from his soul at this hour. Oh! may we use our sorrows, as our joys, aright; may we learn the lessons which can be taught us in no other way, and as we go to the grave of our honored dead, may we find the spirit outside the sepulchre, rejoicing in its deliverance from the bondage of an infirm body, and returning to our varied duties, discover that having lost a mortal, we have found an immortal helper. Our prayer to-day is only this, that our wills may be one with thine, and that our love, like thine, may be pure and all-embracing. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

Why was our President taken away? This is a question which every heart and mind asks to-day. The ways of God are beyond all human finding out. The purposes of the Eternal are inscrutable.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps on the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

These words of the poet come home to us at this hour with a solemnity, with a truthfulness and with a living power which they never seemed to possess before. For in the nation's calamity, in the great sorrow which has overtaken the world, we cannot fail to believe, we cannot fail to note with the certainty of the intuitions of the soul, that God doeth all things well, and that Love and Wisdom Eternal have dealt the blow, despoiling the nation, and taking from us the one whom we gladly acknowledged as our chosen representative.

When first the blow was struck, when the assassin's ruthless hand was outstretched to take from you your pride and your joy, there were many who said: "In a few hours all will be over, and President Garfield will be numbered with the dead ere the sun rises upon the earth another morn." But all over the land, and in all parts of the civilized world, those who were inspired from above, whose minds were keenly alive to the interests of the hour, and who could in some degree penetrate the veil of mystery in which the nation's hope was shrouded, said: "He will not die to-day, neither to-morrow, neither this week, nor this month; but he will live to finish his work." Some may have been rash enough in their statements to say he will recover, and, undoubtedly, there were those in the form and out of it, who, seeing the magnitude of the work which President Garfield had yet to accomplish for this land and even for this earth, thought he would be restored to perfect health and overcome the effects of the blow; but there were others more careful in their statements who said: "He will not live to recover, but he will rally sufficiently to do a powerful work for the good of the land. His power will be so invincible in its might that succeeding generations shall look back upon the short presidential career of President Garfield, and behold crowded into the very few months of his presidency an age of experience, an age of wisdom, and an age of good to the nation."

During the past two or three months of your time how much has been done for this land and for this earth at large through the instrumentality of this one man, that beautiful, ascended spirit, whose transition to the higher life we celebrate to-day, no human thought can imagine and no human language can portray. When Garfield entered the White House a spirit of dissatisfaction reigned throughout the length and breadth of this nation. Unperceived by many of you, unimagined by the majority of the citizens, the spirit of Nihilism, which is antagonistic to all free government and all liberty, whatever Nihilists may say to the contrary, was working with its deadly influence in your midst. Men were beginning to look upon governments as in themselves evil; men were beginning to look upon all officials as their natural enemies, and instead of regarding the President in the light of the one whom they had chosen to represent themselves, they were beginning to look upon all people in authoritative positions as those who were opposed to their advancement. What has Garfield's career accomplished? It has united, in one common bond of sympathy, the various parties in politics. It has brought the Greenbacker, the Democrat and the Republican upon their knees side by side to pray for the welfare of the Re-

publican President. It has caused them to overlook their differences of opinion and to pour out their hearts' deepest sympathies on behalf of their injured brother and injured countrymen. It has done more than that: Throughout all the length and breadth of the land and throughout all civilized communities, it has dealt a death-blow to that spirit of Nihilism which in England and various portions of the continent of Europe has caused insurrections innumerable, only leading to the downfall and misery of those who were hurried on by partisan zealots to their own destruction far more than to the destruction of the governments which they opposed and which they have sought to destroy. This has been often an unnoticed but a desperate warfare, and to-day it has subsided into comparative peace.

This land has been divided into factions, but to-day men are feeling as one, and though years of service, though centuries of years and innumerable lives lived out by various individuals had been put together, as much as these could have done has been accomplished in less than three months by the illness and subsequent transition to the higher life of President Garfield. Are we justifying the assassin? Are we standing up for the man whose ruthless hand dealt the savage blow? Are we countenancing iniquity? Are we justifying a Judas who betrays his Master? or a Pontius Pilate and his worldly clique who preferred the robber to the Saviour? Are we justifying men who by their own malice are capable of performing atrocities which blanch the cheek? By no means! "Woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh!" Yet the wisest teachers will unite in declaring that so long as the earth is growing and men are learning, so long as the age of harmony has not come, offences must of necessity arise, even though woe unto the man through whom they come! We are not among those who tell you that every act of life is ordained, in the Calvinistic sense. We are not among those who tell you that when you tell a lie God inspired the falsehood, or that when you stretch out your hand to murder, that God dealt the blow through the agency of your arm. We are not among those who tell you that man is simply a machine, and that, swayed by outside influences, he cannot do otherwise than as he does; but we recognize a conscience and a soul of freedom, and every one who holds communion with himself alone, in the solitude of his own chamber, in the pathless woods, by the seashore, or in any retired spot, will become conscious of the solemn fact. But while we contend for human freedom—limited, of course, not infinite—while we contend for the right of private action, and while we hold man accountable to his own conscience, and acknowledge that man can do right or wrong by obeying or

disobeying these voices within him, we reiterate the statement that man can never outwit the Infinite, that God will know beforehand what man will do. God will not allow the innocent to suffer for the guilty. No innocent person ever suffers—no innocent person ever suffered for the guilty in this or in any other world, and God never will allow it.

For all those sufferings of the innocent which you may mourn to-day are experiences, necessary means of growth; preparations for the higher life. Whereas the man who violates his own conscience, opposes his own soul, acts counter to his own sense of right, is in the long run always the injured one. He forms his own hell which encompasses him; he cannot escape it; no spot in the universe can afford him immunity from the curses which moral darkness has thrown around him. Whenever one contemplates a wrong toward another he does that wrong to himself, and will find its effects present with him in a future state. But what of his victims? They have grown wiser by their sufferings; in a higher world they rejoice; but he who did wrong alone suffers. And thus we need not ask to-day who is the sufferer, Garfield or Guiteau? Who is the unfortunate man to be pitied? Who is the one to be regarded in the light of an unfortunate victim of a miserable crime through yielding to a depraved desire? Garfield is triumphant. Garfield is a victor, and from his exalted state can stretch out the hand of sympathy to his assassin and exclaim: "Father, forgive him, for he knew not what he did." Garfield from his higher home can overlook this transitory scene of time, and realize that the purposes of the Divine were served, even in the assassin's act; and that while he was allowed to indulge in those propensities that made him a criminal, Garfield's guardian angel, perceiving the event as inevitable, allowed it to come to pass.

Thus God will not be cheated; the universe will not be turned upside down, humanity will not be injured. All that is done is known beforehand and is provided for.

When we speak of free will we merely speak of it in this connection: My free will is my ability to use the powers which God has given me for a noble or ignoble use. My free will consists in that I have the opportunity of learning my own lessons and getting my own experience. God has never given me a power which in itself is evil. I can search the whole universe, and cannot find one atom which is bad. Every passion and proclivity is good. Where, then, comes in the evil? It comes through inexperience, through the abuse of special faculties, which, being developed in an abortive instead of a symmetrical way, produce all the crime and insincerity with which the world is afflicted to-day. If you could not do wrong,

you could not do right; the doing of wrong is the acting with the intention to injure; the doing of right is the acting with the intention to benefit.

The man, woman or child who has done what he could is accepted by the eternal; and those who receive condemnation for disobedience to God's laws are those who have refused to do what they could. *I do* regard the nation's calamity as a divine visitation. I regard it as being overseen and overruled by higher powers. If you were endowed with clairvoyant power, or if, from the attic of your house, should see your child in the cellar set fire to the house, you would not be responsible for the action of that child in any arbitrary sense. If you knew that a certain calamity was to transpire in this building to-day, you would not be the cause of that calamity in the arbitrary sense. In this sense our wise spirit friends are able to give us warnings. Men may very truly say that God, having all power to order the universe as he pleases, everything must be the direct result of God's will, if the will of God be infinite. It is the result of God's will that everything should be as it is; that you should be endowed with all powers; and it is the result of God's will, further, that you should be able to use and abuse your powers. God certainly ordains that. In the future world, yea, upon this earth in times to come, men and women will exist who will be virtuous not merely in name, but from a love of virtue in itself. They will be honest because of a love for honesty, and not because they do not know how to steal. Men will speak the truth because of their love for truth, and not merely because they do not know how to tell a falsehood; because they love divine things and are angelic in the celestial sense, not merely automatically.

This is the problem of life for you to solve: to learn how to act, to learn how to regulate all that you possess. Do the innocent ever suffer for the guilty? The answer, emphatically, is no! How do we know these things? We know them because of our own intuitions; we know them because of our own sense of justice; we know them because of our own reason when applied to human life, and further, because of those inspirations which come from the higher life, and those universal experiences of spirits after passing through material changes; we know them because they are on record everywhere, and have been displayed in all times. Everything that transpires which seems to militate against the interests of an innocent person is, unto that innocent person or innocent community the means of the highest exaltation.

Our President was not taken away until he had done his work. He had a work to do in this land greater than any other President has

been able to accomplish. America is greater to-day than in the days of Washington. America's interests to-day are of more vital importance than they ever were before. America represents more souls than it ever before represented. It is a formation from many nations, a concrete nation to-day, and Garfield as your last President, and as the President of this year 1881—this marvelous year—had a work to do of vast importance to this nation and to the world. That work was silent rather than obtrusive. It was a work which could be quickly performed in the silence of the sick chamber far more successfully than on the battle-field, or when issuing his commands to the assembled multitudes. Garfield is a type of the new administration. Garfield commences the long line of future Presidents whose influence will be felt, and who will rule by spiritual power and noble endurance, rather than with the sword. The days of the sword are well-nigh over. The construction of improved instruments of warfare will cause those instruments to be less and less frequently employed in proportion as they become more terrible and destructive in their effects.

The experiences of past wars have taught the people that warfare is altogether too expensive; that it blasts too many lives and impoverishes the country too much. To-day men are fighting with intellectual rather than with physical weapons. The weapons of their warfare are spiritual rather than material. And as we turn to Garfield's last hours and see him languishing on his bed of pain, we know that from that single room, all over the length and breadth of the civilized world, a divine influence went forth in response to an unfeigned sympathy welling up from human hearts innumerable, that in its power to unite all men was a heavenly benediction. The nation, yea, the world united in wishing one thing at one time.

I do not desire at this time to place Garfield any too high, but in the plain statement of unvarnished truth, we can flatter no one, even though we be compelled to eulogize. Through his whole life his career has been far nobler and more successful than even his most sanguine friends could possibly have anticipated. He is to be honored for his unfaltering attention to the stern demands of honor. Whether men believed with him or not, they could not fail to admire his courage, his faith in God, and his noble determination to do the right, come what might. Rumors were spread at election time by unprincipled partisans, but they gained no acceptance; the nation knew him to be a man who could never be bought or sold. He was a man who would always bow to the decision of his own conscience and his own judgment. In the performance of his duties, onerous as they were, he has been from first to last

an example of persevering industry; he has shown you how, from the lowest position in life, a man may rise to the highest—from the log cabin to the White House. And all along the pathway of his life Garfield's industry, perseverance and indomitable courage, have endeared him to the hearts of all who can appreciate true manly virtue. In his last hours, he accomplished in a few weeks a work so great for this nation's elevation and safety, and for the safety of the working-classes and their employers everywhere, that if you asked us how long Garfield lived in comparison with the length of the lives of some people, who make no mark at all in the world, we should answer so many thousand years that we cannot count them.

In the spiritual world events are everything, and the great work which may be performed in a moment is far longer in its duration, because more extensive and abiding in its effects than that which may occupy centuries of earth's time. Garfield *did* live to finish his work. He lived not to walk amongst you again as a strong, healthy man, able to mingle in your festivities, but he lived, and will live, as a soul who has become a spiritual centre, and operating from that centre the widely diffused influence of his life may be felt all over the earth and in all its surrounding spheres.

How beautifully your President passed away! The words of our opening hymn this morning, "How blest the righteous when he dies," were expressive of the divine simplicity; the grandeur and the harmony of his last hours. He seems to forget all the trial, all the strife, all the disturbance, all the sickness and the pain of the past months; and, transported back to the scenes of his childhood, he is again a little boy, again a simple child, again with those whom he loved the most. Can you doubt that those angelic forms which your hero saw around him were really there? The visions of the dying are realities, and all over the world, in spite of the materialism of to-day, the grand fact of immortality is demonstrated in the life of the spiritually-minded and in the experience of the virtuous when they die. There is in the experience of the dying an argument in favor of immortality that no sophistry can ever quench.

Men, so long as they are worshipping at the shrine of Mammon, and their business is their all-in-all, can be skeptical and atheistic; but if the storm overtakes them they instinctively call upon a higher power, and even the infidel in a shipwreck goes down upon his knees and says, "God save me." [Applause.] Infidelity cannot continue to exist. It is a reaction from superstition, an outgrowth of sensuality. Yea, sensuality and superstition have created the atheism of to-day. Many an unbeliever says to the church, "You have made me an atheist." We answer, "Possibly the church has done so," be-

cause the church has not interpreted the sympathy of human life; the connection between the mind and heart, the soul and the intellect.

If we are to have a new religion, it will be Rationalism and Spiritualism combined. It will be the religion of the intellect and of the soul. We have infidelity to-day because men cannot believe on trust and sacrifice reason in order to obey the dictates of theology. Atheism is transitional—only a passage way between a gloomy room and a brilliantly-lighted hall. The future religion will be a religion which calls in the aid of material science in order to demonstrate the truths of spiritual existence. The time will come when science will no doubt prove the existence of the soul. Man's intuitions and spiritual nature, struggling for a perfectly-rounded life, may work through a healthy mind, and through physical powers which also may themselves be employed in order to demonstrate the soul which matter enshrines, but which matter cannot evolve, but simply embody.

In the last hours of your President's life how beautifully the angels ministered unto him! How lovingly they assured him of immortality! And if you could have followed him beyond the mortal life, across the threshold of heaven, where he entered into blessed communion with the dear ones who had long ago or recently passed away, you would have found that he was no stranger in that happy sphere; he was well known there—a welcome guest and a well-known visitor; he went to his own familiar place; went to the world whither he had often gone in his dreams, and from which he had gained that strength which enabled him to come forth victorious from many a crisis even when the physicians had given him up. He was borne aloft oftentimes on the tide of angelic sympathy; he has been taken unto the spiritual world in his sleep, and there his wasted energies have been recuperated.

So your prayers and good wishes and aspirations have caused you to send forth the tide of your own living sympathy, until the angels have taken it to him as a healing balm and a restorative influence. Had it been for his welfare, had it been for the good of the nation, he would not have died. Had it been better for him and for you that he should have remained, then he would have remained.

This death, we say, is for the glory of God and for your highest good. It is to aid the manifestation of the spirit in human life, and through it the powers of the spirit will be more and more clearly demonstrated.

Your President! is he your President no longer? Can he not whisper his counsels through the mediumship of his beloved wife and other members of his family, and through his fellow statesmen who wish to be guided by his counsel? As an un-

fettered spirit he can go from place to place, doing for you what the infirmities of the body and its need of repose always prevented him from doing on earth. As an unfettered spirit, having opened your hearts to receive his counsel, and having united your feelings one with another, he begins his new work.

Next Sunday morning our lecture will be on Garfield in the spirit-world, when we will endeavor to give you, if we can, a brief outline of the great service of those heroic souls who, beginning a work for a nation or humanity, have never failed to accomplish it fully, even unto the glorious end. Where is our knightly hero? Even with Lincoln, with Garrison, with all those who are illustrious because of their fight for truth and their identification with the salvation of their country. Why do you mourn his loss? You mourn because you cannot see beyond the earthly life; but it is, as the wise man said, very often "better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of rejoicing." The very sweetest experiences of my life were those hours I spent at the bedsides of sufferers and at the grave-side of those who had looked their last upon their earthly friends through eyes of clay. My sweetest experiences were those when I was called upon to administer to those in affliction, for I realized that in their sorrow when their loved ones were taken away they were more open to heavenly influences than in their days of prosperity. When all things are going well you are contented with the life that now is, with the things which are seen and temporal, but as soon as the death-angel visits you and the darkness comes, as quickly as the loved ones are taken away, you lay hold upon some consolation which earth cannot afford. In those bitter hours of sorrow your stricken hearts can find refuge in the Fountain of all Consolation, and you hold more loosely to the earth, and even though at times the victims of spiritual depression, you are drawn, through sorrow, into living communion with the unseen world, and are brought to lay hold of immortality.

If men felt no natural grief at their loved ones passing away, they would usually fail to give that thought to spiritual things which is necessary in order to glorify this earthly life. When this world becomes literally spiritualized, and all its inhabitants are at one with the Spirit of God, death will be swallowed up in victory. There will be no suffering and no sorrow. You will see your friends gone out of their human forms in clairvoyant vision; you will talk with them and walk with them and be with them forever. When you are prepared for this you will overcome death, and recognize the spiritual body as you now recognize the material form. But as all truth is in this wise revealed unto humanity, being given unto you from above according to your state, so you must grow

to appreciate the higher truth or that truth will not be unfolded unto you. To-day men are in sorrow; but what are they doing in their sorrow? They are paving the way for a period of national prosperity which this and other lands have not yet known. They are to-day cultivating the finer sentiments of human nature. Rome was educated and became a prey to licentiousness. Greece was educated, and Greece fell a prey to the Romans, and eventually Greece and Rome fell together. Learning existed among the Jews, but this did not save their tribes from dispersion. There may be tremendous power of intellect, as wealth, in a community, but it may be developed into crime or into the sublimity of virtue. There may be attainment in art, industry, scientific knowledge and mechanical skill, immense general ability, and yet the nation may be morally bankrupt, though enjoying the advantages of the most perfect secular education—I mean that education which teaches the brain to think and the brain to act, but which does not reach the soul. You may have a great people, but they will rule by power, by the weapons of warfare, and then these weapons will be afterward turned against themselves and they will be stricken to the dust.

We are supporters of the common schools. We believe in the education of the people, and that the more thoroughly they are educated the better it will be for them. Let them learn their Latin, their Greek and their Hebrew; let them all be mathematicians, astronomers, musicians, painters and sculptors, if they can, and they can make their homes beautiful by the exercise of their combined efforts. The more they know the greater will be their usefulness when their souls are touched; but without spirituality and religious training, with simply the unfolding of the intellect, the man who is brilliantly endowed and beautifully attired with all outward adornment is a walking corpse; he is merely a galvanized, lifeless creature, so far as sympathy and power are concerned, that may at any moment strike you down, as might some terrible instrument of torture, which is externally beautiful, but which moves only in obedience to the depraved influences of a carnal mind. All learning, all outward beauty is glorious if under the sway of the soul. All our scientific advancement to-day; all our artistic and literary improvement is paving the way for the spirit of love in our midst, when the religion of Jesus shall become a practical power instead of a dead letter, and men will begin to live truly and happily. The religion of Jesus to-day—what is it? It is practically dead in a majority of instances. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," is the command of Moses; but Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount reverses the Mosaic Law. Christians coming from their

churches, coming from the study of the Bible, urge that Guiteau shall be hung. Jesus says: "You shall not take an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"; but nominal Christians say "That man should be suspended from the gallows"; that he shall be punished, through his accusers imitating his crime; thus do his reputed followers in the greater degree practice that which Jesus forcibly condemns even in its milder form. They say: "Take a whole body for a whole body."

Do you wonder that Christianity is pronounced a failure? Do you wonder that the Bible is being regarded by many sage men as a dead letter? Do you wonder, after the dissemination of Christianity for centuries, that truth-seekers often turn their faces against Christianity to worship at the shrine of Materialism rather than be guided by inspiration? The fault is not in Jesus; the fault is not in the Bible; it is not in Christianity as a system of religion; but the fault is in the people, who have been satisfied with limp professions; the fault has been in the education of the ministers, who have been sent to college to find out what Jerome, Tertullian, Polycarp and Augustine said about Jesus, rather than to follow practically what he said himself was the only divine career. To get through college, and pass a certain intellectual examination, has been the sole aim too frequently; and when the examination ceremonies are gone through with, ministers who enter the church as a profession, in the opinion of their hearers are called by the Holy Ghost to minister unto the people. No matter what their qualifications or abilities may be, they have to pay a literal obedience to that interpretation of the gospel which suits the fancy of a congregation or forfeit popularity.

Remember that with Bible texts you can support anything you please. In slavery times ministers from their pulpits quoted the words, "God hath made everything beautiful in its season." They advocated slavery, saying that "God had made slavery beautiful in its season." So we may go to the Bible and find a sanction for and even authority for many kinds of indiscretion and even crime. But the character of Jesus cannot thus be assailed. If Jesus at times seems to be impetuous, and seems to claim honor for himself in the fourth Gospel, he claims it only for himself as for one who is divinely commissioned to act as the servant of God. In the other three his words concerning himself are all deeply humble.

On a moral plane the life of Jesus is beyond reproach. Not one word can ever be breathed against the integrity of that ideal character which shines out of the pages of the Gospel as a luminary from which we may all draw inspirations for ages yet to come. If men think that the story of Jesus and his apostles is only

a mythical tale of the sun and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, it must be because there is so little in their own lives by which they can conceive of such a self-denying love as that of Jesus, that the record of it is to them an absurdity. Whatever may be the groupings of the stars; however true it may be that Jesus, Mary and the saints are worshiped even in the very places where devotion was formerly paid to the heavenly bodies, there is in the story of Jesus a life-history of the attainments, not of one, but of a multitude of noble minds, among which Jesus stood preëminent. The story of Jesus is a picture, the highest that human minds can paint; a photograph of the human soul when clearly manifest in the grand simplicity of a thoroughly pure life. Jesus stands before you as a typical person. Whether he did or did not live in Palestine two thousand years ago, is not the question of his power. We do not find that his influence is strengthened if we prove him to be an historical personage, or weakened even if it could be proved that he never existed: the teachings attributed to him are their own endorsement: The law of love is the only law whereby men can be moved to work in harmony with the spirit-world. If the nation asks to-day, what are we to do with Guiteau? and how are we to show our indignation against the wrong that has been committed? let us answer with the meek and lowly prophet of Nazareth, while expiring on the cross amidst sorrows and anguish indescribable on behalf of all who are overcome by their passions, in the words of his inimitable prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," then go forth and devise plans for the restoration to virtue of the criminal.

Why do men pray? Why does the sun shine? The man who prays truly can no more help praying than the sun can help shining. It is in the nature of things; it is in the nature of man. Am I to be forced to pray, or shall I pray because it is my duty? Am I to go down upon my knees at certain stated intervals because I am required to do it? If so, it is a mockery; it is a mere expenditure of empty breath, and that is the end of it. But if in your desire to be guided by higher powers words are formed and fall spontaneously from your lips, your prayer is the natural result of a spiritual force which cannot do other than produce it.

"Father, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us!" Unless we are willing and desirous of returning good for evil unto all, our petition is blasphemous. "Lead us not into temptation!" Then do not lead your fellow-beings into temptation. Close up all the gin-palaces you can and suppress the means of vice. [Applause.]

"Lead us not into temptation!" Then live

out your lives in such a manner that incentives to virtue may be momentarily multiplied. Save your brother from the clutches of the destroyer, and never be yourself the evil one to lead him into the path of destruction.

All prayers should be the voicings of the soul's unquenchable desire—the desire of our lives being summed up in the glowing words which fall from our tongues. And these prayers for the President, have they done any good? Yes, they have done you good. Whether they have done him good or not, they have helped you all. God would be very unjust if he allowed other people to be dependent upon your prayers, because if you liked them they might go to heaven, or go to hell if you disliked them, and thus be not at all dependent upon their own merits or demerits. Whatever effect prayer has upon another, true prayer elevates those who pray. If I pray in this assembly this morning I use words not because God needs them, but because you and I need them. I pray in order that I may call your attention to divine things, and unite your feelings, thus helping to express and develop divine sentiments, and produce an influence in this room apprising you all of the spirit of aspiration. My prayer is sincere if it represents my real wishes when I desire something. I open the windows of my soul, and allow the free air and the light to rush in, thus driving out the darkness and suffocation. I breathe freely because I have admitted air, not because I induced God to create it for me. The old idea of prayer was that God could be persuaded from doing evil unto his creatures if they curried favor with him. The new idea of prayer is that God helps everybody who helps himself, and that we must work for ourselves, and cooperate with the Divine Power, or otherwise we may not receive the divine blessing. Prayer must ever be action beyond words. How, then, can you show your respect and your love for the poor and distressed? Not by locking your money up in the bank away from the sufferers in Michigan, who have nothing to eat, while you pray for them. If you desire to give them any help, and live in luxury refusing to aid them, you may rest assured that your desires on their behalf are of no very deep or true nature if you content yourselves with asking God to feed and clothe them, when God has given you the wherewithal, and endowed you with what they need. You are called upon to be his steward; and to ask God to help them, and refuse to help them yourself, is to insult God by an act of most outrageous blasphemy; by praying that another may be helped, and then withholding from them your own support, you curse yourselves, and deceive your own souls.

Our prayers must be in our lives. If some poor man, or poor woman or child, who has not a rag to cover himself and nothing to eat, prays with all the sincerity of his heart that God will save others from the same affliction, is he praying in vain? No! That little child or man or woman has given what he could. A tide of sympathy goes forth, and this poor creature will have given more, though he be the poorest on this earth, than they who give largely into the treasury of the Lord, while they keep back a portion even of what they can easily spare. It

is not what we give, but how we give it; not the words we use, but the spirit of our prayer.

Can our prayers to-day help our ascended President? Is there not a beautiful thought connected with prayer for the dead? Were it not sad to feel that when our loved ones pass away they are wholly separated from us? We can help them on as well as we can be helped by them. Is it not beautiful to feel that when the mother loses her child she may send up to her darling one the very inspiration that he needs to urge him forward? Is it not beautiful to realize that your departed friends are around you, and that they are helping you, and that in blessing you they are blessed in return? If there be any experience through which the soul must pass for its elevation, remember this cannot be escaped; no one can go to heaven by proxy; no one can have anything in the spiritual world which he does not deserve. You must earn everything you get there, and those earnest aspirations and loving sympathies which are continually going forth from your minds, purify and elevate you; they also cause your loved ones to rejoice as they see and know that they are not forgotten by you; for your "dead," as you call them, are sympathetic and affectionate, and care for you more than they ever cared before. They are easily touched by you just as much as they were on earth, and even may become more sensitive. Even as by quickening the processes of development you may force the flower to bloom in a much shorter period of time, so by stretching out the hand of sympathy and urging your departed ones forward, by the kindness of your protection you may cause them joy, and awaken in them a sense of all that is pure and noble, for the two worlds are indissolubly knit together. We are dependent upon each other here and there. We cannot leave one in the spirit-world though leaving those on earth. A prayer of earnest sympathy and kindly thought of the past is not in vain. So, to-day, as we think of our beloved President, he realizes all that we wish for him. He feels the love which goes out from our hearts. He is better because of our thoughts of him.

Oh! let us pay our tribute to our ascended President by determining in the future, as we have never done in the past, to identify ourselves with the nation in every particular. Let our influence be for the elevation of the country, so that we may supply from within ourselves the materials which have been removed from us in the passing away of the President's earthly form. He is going to work still in this world; now he asks you to give him the materials out of which he may construct the implements which are needful in the execution of his design. He asks you to give him force to externalize here his virtuous designs, give him the conditions through which he can most readily elevate his country. Will you do it? Each in your own way, one at the White House, one at the cook-stove; one making dresses for the children, one speaking from the platform; one singing sweet songs of praise, others striving in various branches of mechanical industry, each in his own place, remembering that the work depends upon you all. We have no autocrat or Czar; no royal family upon which to depend. Our governors are ourselves, and as our intelligence improve, our safety is assured. As our morality shines brighter and brighter we shall be like a light set upon a hill whose glory can never be concealed. Let us, if we can—and we can if we will—fill the place of our ascended

President. Let us do what he would have done had he lived. Let us have a President, or a ruling power, composed of the best thought of thousands, yea, of millions, of souls working in harmony, and marching under the leadership of those whom we admire in the higher life; following our highest impressions for our country's future, we need feel no fear. For, as Garfield said when Lincoln passed away, "Though our President is dead, God reigns, and the Government at Washington still lives," so we say, with soul and voice united in this hour of mingled mourning and rejoicing, Our President's body is dead; but God lives, and Garfield lives, and through his faithful ascended servant the Eternal Spirit will shed blessing and prosperity on our land. Our work is to do our best, and leave results to Heaven.

IMPROMPTU POEM.

He is not dead, that noble soul,
But gone unto a world above!
He lives, he reigns forevermore;
On earth to shed his light and love;
His pain is past, his trials sleep
In God's eternal ocean deep;—
God's ocean of immortal love,
Immortal wisdom, where the light
And joy of happiness divine
Encrowns each conqueror in the fight.
Each task performed, to him is given
The welc'm'g smile of highest heaven!

His form may rest in earth's dark bed,
His mind repose awhile from care,
But he shall wake with added power
And work—for in heaven's clearest air,
All freed from mortal pain and ill,
Each happy soul is active still.

The weeping willow, cypress shade,
Funeral robes, betok'ning loss;
The sadd'ning symbols of distress,
The pleading emblem of the cross,
The heart felt tear, the strain of grief,
The wailing o'er life's faded leaf:

Pass on from these, and plant the rose,
The lily o'er your hero's grave;
Rear ye above his form's repose—
Where sweeps proud Erie's kingly wave—
A monument which shall declare
Man's love of Freedom placed *it there!*

But he hath passed the gate of death;
He did not fear its icy hand;
He shrank not—at his parting breath
Ere passing to the Better Land
Visions of youth their glory shed—
Angels from heaven his footsteps led.

Oh happy President, and free!
We envy thy transcendent might,
We see thee crowned as few can be,
For thine has been a wondrous fight;
"A self-made man," earth minds exclaim,
"A heaven-developed soul," we claim.

True, all must live, and all must die,
To be re-born in higher life;
All tread some darkling vale of tears—
All must encounter earthly strife;
But what have mortal hearts to fear,
When risen friends in light appear?

O! noble countrymen, our brave
Reformers, teachers, Saviours true;
They constitute when freed from earth
A shield invincible and new;
They from their spheres of light above,
Unite us in the bonds of love.

Adieu, brave President, adieu!
Thou hast passed nearer unto God;
Nearer to Him through suffering here,
Nearer, through sorrow's chast'ning rod,
Nearer, while thou the cross sustained,
Nearer, till thou the crown hast gained!

PRESIDENT GARFIELD LIVING AFTER DEATH.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

"If a man die, shall he live again?"

"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

This question is found in the Old Testament, the answer is found in the New.

While truth is ever the same, unchangeable and unchanging from eternity, its manifestations through human souls are variously adapted to the various conditions of human life.

In ages of barbarism, when man is almost entirely engrossed in earthly cares, when he is obliged to expend nearly all of his energy in satisfying the cravings of the physical form, there is very little time or opportunity for intellectual cultivation or for spiritual unfolding, and, therefore, in the early ages of the world man's ideas of the future life were very inferior and very hazy. Their gods were animals and flowers and birds, and all material things, which ministered unto their earthly necessities. They beheld a power in nature greater than themselves, and they knew that beyond their control were the forces of nature. And thus they acknowledged the existence of a Deity, but at the same time that Deity was unto them a crude material creature, endowed with their fallings, their passions, and their imperfections. Their ideas of a future life were born out of their own intuitive convictions, as the result of their dawning reason, for it is rational to believe in immortality, and it is irrational to deny it.

The human soul itself is its own revealer, its own interpreter, and if, in certain instances, men and women have no knowledge of immortality, and no belief in it; if in certain cases men's minds are so dwarfed that they cannot

behold an immortal life stretching out beyond the confines of the grave, this is no more to be wondered at than it is a matter for surprise that there are persons who cannot see, and yet who have eyes that look just as good as yours, or that there are men who cannot hear, and yet no outside observer can see that anything is the matter with their ears. So there are men upon the earth to-day, good and honorable men, high-principled men, who cannot realize immortality, because their spiritual eyes, or their spiritual ears, or their spiritual brains are deficient, though as you look upon them outwardly and behold their general sanity you cannot detect that there is anything wrong. But a belief in immortality, which is the outgrowth of man's recognition of the necessity of the future life, is ever informing him that the supply in existence is sufficient for all demands. "If a man die, shall he live again?" If a man were really to die he could never live again. The man dies not, but the man's garment wears out, and as the garment wears out it is removed, and as the garment is removed another garment takes its place, being woven around the spirit by entirely natural processes, so that, as the serpent may dismiss its skin and then find that it is clothed with a new one, even so man, passing out of the life material into the spiritual world, unless his death has been prematurely hastened by his own suicidal act, will find around him that which has grown there from birth—it being ready for his use when his outward tenement shall have become unfitted for occupancy any longer.

A man *has* a body, but a man *is* a soul, and, therefore, the man dies not. He lives forever, and casting off the mortal tenement is only

like casting off an old coat and finding yourself already provided with a new one which fits you far more comfortably; for we can say that we know that when the earthly tabernacle is dissolved we have "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." We mean by the building of God a spiritual structure, an edifice which cannot fall into decay, which will know no corruption; an eternal being is a being composed of those elements of life which in themselves are eternal and can never be destroyed, and a building of God in the heavens signifies a place in those calm and blessed regions of the soul where the warfare and strife of earth are forever ended.

We can, however, enter into no heaven simply because we pass out of the mortal form, and cannot enjoy it because of the location of our bodies; we cannot enjoy even material surroundings, unless the appreciation of them is ours. Our building of God, eternal in the heavens, is the edifice of the far, far future. It is the temple of the soul, which, foreshadowed unto great minds in the past as a vision of ineffable brightness, is your ultimate attainment. But for any one to imagine that men slip off the mortal coil and enter directly into heaven when they have not undergone all necessary discipline, is to acknowledge the existence of a partial God, who favors some of his creatures and abuses others. There are those on earth to day who imagine that they have a high sense of honor, and who talk very loudly concerning the claims of justice, who expect that when their earthly life is ended they will go immediately to heaven, but who have very little thought of the trouble others will have in getting there. Some people are considered uncommonly good because they abstain from all evil actions they have no disposition to perform; easily following out the force of their own inclinations, they have been protected by circumstances from almost all evil influences; born of good family, well educated, with very few temptations to evil, priding themselves upon their abstinence from the commission of crime, they consider that the death-angel has only to liberate them from the mortal form, and then they will be in the highest glory, and at perfect and infinite rest in heaven. Such a conception of eternity is altogether at variance with truth. It is opposed to that justice which is meted out to all, and perceived by those who understand that God is no respecter of persons. You must all fight the battle, you must all earn the prize; and those of you who in this life have developed no positive virtue, will find that it is not only your duty, but also your privilege, to enter into other spheres of being, and advance there through effort, as it is impossible to reach exalted states without labor. You will benefit yourselves by developing the graces in others.

Leaving these generalizations, which we have introduced simply as a prelude to our lecture, we will ask the direct question—"Where is President Garfield to-day? How is he living after death, and in what large measure is he now capable of helping you?"

In the columns of the *Boston Investigator* we are informed that God cannot exist, or cannot be just and loving, if Garfield is removed in the very height of his earthly power, and in the very opening of his brilliant presidential career. We are told that a wise, just, loving and omnipotent God would know better than to take Garfield away just at the very moment when he could do the most good on earth, and that the fact of his going away, slain by the assassin's hand, is a proof that either God, or a good God, does not exist. Leaving the materialists to the material world, if they would allow themselves to have their eyes opened to the influence of Garfield's transition upon this material life, they would realize that if God has made no provision for any future state, that God has made a very good move, and done a very wise thing in taking Garfield away from the scene of his earthly labors at the time he did; and that if God is working for the interests of this world, and for this world only, and seeking for the best possible good of his creatures, then in removing Garfield at the moment he did, and causing him to ascend to the higher life, he produced an influence upon this world so great and powerfully good, that it transcends the powers of human eloquence to express its magnitude. If Garfield had never gone away he would never have been appreciated. The influence of his life would never have been truly acceptable to the people. He might have lived on day after day, month after month, and year after year in perfect health and through party strife; criticised by numbers, sometimes admired and sometimes condemned: no matter what the purity of his aims, no matter what the grandeur of his life, no matter what the attainments of his self-denying industry or indomitable perseverance, they would have all been lost sight of by those who are always watching and criticising the actions of public men in their endeavors to set up their own party and to dethrone the opposite party. Such would lose sight of the beauty of the spirit which was working through the earthly form of their President, who was known to be identified with one party—being elected by those who adhered principally to the Republican side.

Now that Garfield has gone away he lives in your memories. He lives in the influence which he exerts, by having caused you to admire him, and to admire the course of action which he pursued, and which led to so successful a termination of his earthly labors. Garfield's life

is valuable to you, because you can now look at it from a distance; having forgotten all the agitations which surrounded him on earth, you can gaze upon the picture now that it hangs up in every household, and see the benevolence, and justice, and perseverance, which have made such a beautiful character of this man. In this country our heroes and our heroines exert a far more powerful posthumous influence for good than they ever can in those countries which are subjected to monarchical rule. If a man is born into a royal family, if you can urge that he has blue blood in his veins, and that all of his ancestors have been distinguished people; if he has been protected from the effects of vice and the possibilities of ignorance, brilliantly surrounded, always provided with everything that is calculated to stimulate all that is highest and best in man, you can admire him from afar off, as you would admire a glorious star, but you cannot reach him. He seems to be one of those fabled angels who, with wings on their shoulders, seem to have come from other worlds and do not belong to this earth, and therefore lose the influence for good which their purity would have otherwise exerted upon humanity. He may be like one of those gods or goddesses of Greece or Rome, beautiful in all the perfections of chiseled loveliness, and yet at the same time not man or woman, but something above humanity. If any member of a royal or any aristocratic family on the continent of Europe does any daring deed, or performs any great service for the world, ordinary men and women admire, but they seem to feel as though they cannot follow. They look upon such heroes as belonging to some peculiar order, or to a higher stratum of society, as they call it, and contemplate them as though they were altogether above themselves; but in this land your Washington, your Lincoln, your Garfield are men who have come up from among the people. They were neither lords, dukes, earls, kings nor emperors, only ordinary citizens, who have risen by their indomitable perseverance; and while we pronounce these words concerning Garfield, and concerning all of our heroes, we announce to the churches that the reason why the religion of Jesus is not more powerful in the land to day is because they have made Jesus God instead of man, and by making Jesus God, they cause man to worship and admire, but not to follow.

How can I be as good as God? is a very natural question for a man to ask. If God incarnated himself in a human body to save souls from everlasting loss, he can admire the condescension of the infinite; but when asked to make the divine life a pattern will exclaim: "How can I walk in the foot-steps of God, when I am only a frail, weak, sinning human being?" Thus the influence of Jesus loses all its power,

and is reduced at once to the level of the statue or picture which you can only gaze upon. But as soon as theologians cease to make of him a super-angelic being and he becomes man, and only man: as soon as he becomes the village carpenter, and only the village carpenter: as soon as he becomes the itinerant preacher, and nothing more than the itinerant preacher—a natural medium, endowed with powers which require to be unfolded by strict self-discipline, by self-sacrificing love, in order to bring them to perfection—then Jesus, whether regarded as an historical or an ideal personage, is for you the way, the truth, and the life. But he can never be the way until he is regarded as human like yourselves. The way for man to walk to heaven is, of course, the way of the cultivation of all human talents; and as a great and glorious hero is an uncommon man, and yet only a man, in the divine sense he is a martyr and the Messiah, as he is very man of very men, and no more God than you or I. Thus he becomes the embodiment of divinity; then all the splendor of his soul shines out through the environment of flesh, and assures us that we may all be what he professes we may become, divine also. Make Jesus simply a man, and he rises into oneness with the Godhead, as we may all rise. Make him simply human, and before he expires on Calvary's Cross he has become divine, and the methods by which he has become divine are the same by which you and I may become divine also. Thus the greatest hero of whom anything has ever been written, by having removed from him all the fictitious beauty and spurious magnificence which theology has spread around him, becomes man's exemplar, man's Saviour, and man's Redeemer.

We do not teach that Jesus is the only exemplar or the only Redeemer and Saviour of the race. We mean all noble souls collectively when we speak of man's Saviour; we mean every heart which has sacrificed itself in order to uplift humanity. When we speak of man's Redeemer we mean every earnest worker who has been willing to deny himself earthly pleasure in order that others may be benefited by his life, and even by his painful death.

Remove all fiction and fallacy from the story of Brahma, Buddha, Vishnu, Rama, Plato, Confucius, Zoroaster, and indeed every great avatar or reformer, and they display themselves as divine men, because they have been willing to live more self-denying lives than others, and by this means they become inspirations to us. Human minds seem obliged to look upon a man from a distance to learn the lessons from his life. Let us, now that our President is no longer with us in form, identify ourselves with him; we are ordinary men, he was an ordinary man; and if he became extraordinary, our pos-

sibilities for becoming extraordinary also are just as good as his, for we have just as good souls as his. Now, as we stand to-day at a distance and think of how Garfield lived, we see him living still; and as we admire the nobility of his life, and contemplate with delight the picture of his dying experiences, we shall be led into a more perfect understanding of the secret of his power. Let us never forget that this man, whose death was heralded through all the papers of the world the next morning, was born in a log cabin, and made his own way to the White House. If you study well the source of his greatness, those of you who were born in some obscure station, you who have been sighing for place and power, will no longer repine at your fate, but will try to accomplish whatever you can, knowing that from the lowest places many have risen to the highest. It is, to our way of thinking, a misfortune rather than a blessing to be born into all the seductions of luxury. It is not for the highest welfare of man that he should be born where he can be surrounded with everything that pampers the appetite; but for one who is truly great to be born in poverty, is to be born in a condition from which he can rise to the highest pinnacles of success and fame.

Garfield does not only live in your memories, but he lives also, to-day, as an independent soul; as an individual spirit, who is upon this land working for the elevation of the American people, and working also for those older nations which seem as though they were to lose themselves eventually in the tide of your ever-widening life.

Where is Garfield to-day? Could you have been with him in his last hours and beheld his passage from the material form, you would have felt certain that he realized that he was only taking a forward step. His sensations were very much like those of a Free Mason who, from the position of an Entered Apprentice, has taken the degree of Fellow-Craftsman, and who is about to take higher honors and become a Master Mason. He was fully conscious of all that was transpiring around him, even while the spirit was fettered, and impeded in its movements by the body, which had been improperly treated, and rising into a state of ecstasy he broke the cord which united spirit and body and soared away freely, as an eagle, which has been confined in a cage, rejoices to stretch its wings and soar away to some high and lofty eyrie in the fastnesses of the overhanging rock.

We admit first, and we admit last, that it was expedient for you that Garfield went away; and we admit that the nation is benefited by the turn affairs have taken, and that God overrules all things for good; but we also, on the human side of life, maintain that if Garfield had been otherwise treated medically he would have

recovered. He was drugged to death. If you put a man under the influence of opiates, you simply force him to sleep under the influence of sheer exhaustion. That is why doctors are often so very careful, that they will steadily refuse to give draughts to make invalids sleep—they are aware of the drain upon the sufferer's vitality occasioned by anæsthetics; whereas by putting a person to sleep through the influence of healthy magnetism, you infuse into the debilitated frame a health-restoring force, which produces the vital power necessary to strengthen the person sufficiently to enable nature to work freely. Every time you magnetize, you assist nature to follow out its lawful course, thereby making natural sleep a possibility; and consequently, from the physical side of life, we may assert that President Garfield is not only a martyr to the bullet of Guiteau, but also a martyr to the prejudice and ignorance of those men who have been endeavoring to suppress all free medical practice, and to compel persons, whether they will or not, under menace of the laws, to submit to the arbitrary dictum of men who know nothing except what they can learn in schools of physical investigation. Many magnetizers know already all they can learn in colleges. The knowledge they get at college is useful; we advocate a collegiate course; we appreciate the superlative advantages of a thorough knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and recommend every item of information being obtained that can possibly be had; but we maintain that beyond this external information, in order to be successful we require spiritual discernment. Physicians must be born instead of manufactured; the power to heal being a gift of healing, may be cultivated, just as you may cultivate a musical or any other talent in a child who is born with the talent; but you know that cultivation will not *produce* genius. Let your colleges still stand, and let us have all the knowledge we can get; let us glorify learning, but never attempt to put any one into a medical college to send him out into the world as a physician, unless we find that he is endowed with clairvoyant or magnetic power. If any one supposes that we antagonize learning, they have altogether mistaken our views.

But while we believe in cultivation, we believe in having something to cultivate before we try to cultivate it, and then in applying the necessary training to unfold latent possibilities. President Garfield having gone away from the earth, has done this good in addition to all the other good which he has accomplished: he has demonstrated the necessity of the nation's recognizing clairvoyance; he has proved to the world that physical science, with respect to health, is not enough when it is not supplemented by spiritual power. Spiritual power can, and oftentimes does, effect a cure, almost

a resurrection, through the mediumship of an entirely ignorant person, but apart from spiritual discernment, apart from sympathy, apart from the healing gift, science never accomplishes the best results. There are persons with natural magnetic healing power, and with sympathetic natures, who are acted upon by outside intelligences when they know it not. No doubt Dr. Bliss, for instance, is a natural magnetist, his sanguine temperament, cheery manners and irrepressible habit of looking on the bright side, being one cause of the President's transitory recoveries.

Clairvoyance can reveal to you what the knowledge of the schools cannot, because the clairvoyant's eyes can see directly to the affected spot, and perceiving the cause of the derangement, they do not stumble in the way whereby they shall do good. President Garfield has instructed the world by passing out of the earthly life in such a way as to prove to many the necessity of turning attention to clairvoyants and to natural magnetizers, if we are to improve the health of the country, and save many from disease and death. We have not a word of blame for any honest physicians, or even for those people who are endeavoring to establish laws for the suppression of clairvoyant power. We have no word of blame for any who differ from us. They may be honest and sincere people. They may be good at heart, and conscientiously believe that the health and safety of the community are in their charge, but they are mistaken. It is not for us to blame them. Let them learn by experience, and they will see the error of their ways. It is not wisdom to accuse those who are not gifted with our knowledge; but it is our positive duty to announce facts from time to time as they are revealed unto us, in no uncertain tone. President Garfield lives in your minds as an evidence that all insurrections, that all feeling against government, as such, that all harsh measures employed to bring about personal aggrandizement, and that all failures to recognize spiritual power, and unwillingness to investigate fact, will result disastrously to the nation. All unknown to many of you, a spirit of dissatisfaction has been creeping over this land, even as it has crept over England, but men who are led on by fanatical zealots to conspire against governments are conspiring against themselves.

The capitalists are very much to blame, but the laboring classes also are very much at fault. In England, in Ireland, and in Russia, the peasantry have been shamefully oppressed; the working people have been defrauded out of their rights, and we do not wonder that they have risen up in insurrection, burning mills and factories, and even assassinating the Czar. When the capitalist begins to acknowledge that he has done wrong, we may hope he

will do better; when we address an audience of capitalists we shall speak against the iniquities of their class in far sterner language, if need be, than we ever find employed in those journals which side against them. When we have an audience of working people, we shall, without saying one word against the capitalist, point out to them the errors of their own class. For as men will behold the iniquities of their own doing, they will learn to cast the beam out of their own eyes. Whenever in this, or any other land, you find agitators going about the country, endeavoring to make the working people dissatisfied with their condition, remember that they are the enemies of freedom. If you have anything to find fault with in the capitalist, go to him and tell it to him to his face, and try to make him do better. The reason why such bloody insurrections have occurred in so many different countries in the name of the struggle for freedom, is because the agitator has prejudiced one class against the other. Garfield is a martyred governor—a martyred President; he stands in the very highest position of state as the embodiment and representative of the law.

Garfield is dear unto you as a martyred President, a martyred governor; in days to come you will cling to his memory as you do now to that of the martyred Lincoln. Through such memories is the nation to be blessed and exalted, and in such a way that while the nation is blessed the martyred man shall find that from the very moment of his entrance into the spiritual world he has begun, on behalf of the nation, a grander work than has ever yet been attempted by any potentate, governor or President. We are now upon the very threshold of an era of peace, when the prophecies of ancient inspired Jews will be more than fulfilled.

We are not at all surprised to be informed by some who claim inspiration, that during the next few years there will be a bloody war on the Continent of Europe; or a war in Asia; and that the Ottoman Empire will be destroyed. But America is now passing through a transitional stage, out of warfare into peace, and her next step will be such an upward one that from America will go forth an influence and example teaching the nations that the best way to settle their differences is by arbitration now, until, through the establishment of a confraternity of nations, differences will cease altogether, all men will eventually find their own places and learn to live in them peaceably. The world is large enough for every one, and every one has a right to live; and as every individual finds his own place in the world all will be happy; and we shall no more envy one another's dominions than the reindeer envies the lion his home in the tropics, or the elephant wishes to exchange places with the polar bear.

When we learn to respect one another and desire to get only what is for our proper use and for the welfare of the community, doing unto our neighbors as we would have them do unto us, we shall be happy and enjoy ourselves as angels enjoy themselves.

Garfield is still a politician, still a statesman. He is in his spiritual nature unchanged; he is in a spiritual sense President of the United States still; he will go on perfecting his schemes, deliberating with other great minds, and infusing into your national life the influence which peculiarly proceeds from his masterly mind. He still remains a man with us, only a wiser and a stronger man, with deeper insight into character; a man less liable to make mistakes than when in the body.

It is not derogatory to the happiness of the inhabitants of the spiritual world to take an interest in those material affairs which concern man's highest welfare. Is it not blessed to think that our beloved President is now taking an interest in the affairs of state? Some people think that there is something particularly holy about the unseen world, and peculiarly unholy about this. If God made both worlds, how can one be worse than the other as a world. Goodness and heaven are everywhere where souls find their enjoyment in doing their duty and making others happy.

We acknowledge that in the spiritual state an exalted spirit does not enter into the pettiness of material life; we acknowledge it does not wander around the stock-markets and help you buy and sell, and get gain by unholy processes; we admit that if you ask frivolous questions which appertain only to your own aggrandizement you will receive no answer from spirits of integrity and wisdom. If any person in this hall, to-day, even desires to buy a new bonnet, and wishes that bonnet to be of such a character that it may help her to influence some one to do a good thing (some one who is easily attracted by external adornments), the motive which will prompt her to ask a question about her bonnet will be a motive pure enough to attract an angel; an angel would not consider it beneath his dignity to come from the celestial world in order to help that lady to choose her bonnet. But if she ask solely to gratify vanity, the spirit who answers her question will be a frivolous, earth-bound spirit, who cared for nothing more than the adornment of the person. If by receiving advice concerning the merest things of this world we are enabled to do our duty more faithfully, the obtaining of this counsel is in the eyes of exalted beings by no means a trifling thing.

A single word may change the whole future course of a person's life. A single act of kindness may suffice to stay an assassin's hand, who otherwise would murder your greatest men; a

kindly breath awakening the spirit of good within may lead him forth into the path of benevolence when he was fast traveling along the road to destruction; one kindly act may save not only one but many lives from destruction. Henceforth and forever let the foolish idea that anything which relates to the elevation of the world, or that enables you to do your duty, is beneath the dignity of an angel, be set aside. The desire which prompts you in your intercourse with the spiritual world is all in all. We care not whether it be in building houses or churches, whether it be in publishing a newspaper or a book, or in the ordinary affairs of daily business, you seek the advice of the dwellers in a brighter region; why you ask, not what you ask, is of the greatest spiritual moment. Great people always do very little things well. Very small people are so interested in performing deeds which appear great in the eyes of their fellowmen, that they slight the trivialities and minor portions of their work. Look at the paintings of the greatest masters. You will always discover that, though covering many jar's of canvas with glowing images, the utmost attention has been paid to the minutest details of coloring and shading throughout the work. So in every great musical composition; all the minor passages, all the softer cadences, all the connecting links in a lengthy and massive composition, are just as perfect as the brilliant features of the work; just as much care has been bestowed upon them as upon any major part. Without this perfect exactitude the full harmony could never burst upon you in a rush of heavenly sound. God has bestowed as much care in the disposition of colors on the beetle's wing as he has upon the arrangement of the stars in the firmament. Attention to little duties was a very strong feature in your President's character.

Where is Garfield to-day? He is in that spiritual world which is not only connected with America, but with all portions of the globe. As soon as the spiritual Government improves; as soon as new thoughts enter into the governmental realm of souls who preside over the earth, or over any part of it, that idea is brought out by some mind upon the earth, and you are informed that your existing manners are wrong; your present methods of government need improving. A noble man stands forth and condemns the iniquities of the age; suffers confiscation of his property; suffers, perhaps, even death itself; and then, an age after, receives the worship of the people who have learned to eulogize the man they crucified; they are decorating his grave and building statues in his honor, and are following up in their ordinary methods of legislation the very ideas that he promulgated, and which

were considered so infamous while he lived that he must needs renounce or die for them. The devil believed in by many of the churches is, after all, some new manifestation of genius—all inventions and further revealments of truth being placed to Satan's credit.

The serpent of ancient Egypt, always an emblem of wisdom, when it is applied as the sign of the devil, will call up before you a vision of sagacity, as well as craftiness, or any form of wickedness. The devil believed in by the Christian churches never told a lie, never did a mean action. According to his biographers his whole record is far more creditable than that of many Old Testament heroes. The devil believed in by the churches discovers new facts which help men to live better lives here. He is generally a benefactor of the race, and after his inventions have endured a little while and he has been withstood in the persons of those who are regarded as his mediums, the people learn to admire the other side of the picture. They see that the devil is only the dark shadow which is cast upon the earth by the approaching angel of wisdom, and that which they mistake for a demon is only the shadow of a new deliverer. Thus shall we see some day that all our afflictions, our trials, in short, all the unspeakable miseries of life, are the shadows of coming blessings. Now that this land has been convulsed to its very centre, and the nations have learned to mourn in sympathy for the bereaved family of America's departed statesman, we are just preparing to enter upon an era of peace, when we shall have all our old Presidents back again in spirit, wiser and dearer than ever of old. As he is still fresh in your minds, Garfield will be the chosen representative of that glorious band of inspiring spirits which has been added to and added to by the passing away of so many noble souls until it is now a golden sphere of life encircling this earth, whence streams of heavenly glory may descend incessantly upon this world.

Garfield in the spiritual world is working in

the spirit. He has gone away in order that he may be a connecting link between a higher sphere and yours. Your sympathies have been awakened; you have learned to love and honor fidelity to conviction; and now he is the chosen representative of this higher sphere, and will yet be your President in spirit. It is not for us to augur the future; it is not for us to prophesy respecting the political events which will soon transpire; but whatever they may be, however extraordinary and however specific their character, they will ere long ultimate in the establishment of a government which will satisfy the demands of all right-thinking and right-feeling people.

"He being dead yet speaketh." May we not repeat these words to-day as we think of that noble hero whose body now rests beneath the sod? That body shall rise again upon the earth; that structure shall reappear in yet diviner form in the ages which are yet to be; but the soul will never become unconscious, and never for one moment cease from its activity. He comes forth to greet you from the mouth of the sepulchre, as a messenger of light and divine goodness. As he rose to fame by his own industry and perseverance, so may we all rise also. The story of his life is an inspiration to all.

Our closing word to-day is to those who bemoan the limitations of their spheres, and the littleness of what they can accomplish. Those humble ones who are not endowed with earth's possessions, these are and always will be the chosen people of God. When a teacher like Jesus comes to the earth, he is not born in a palace, but grows up in the midst of the abodes of ignorance, because there is the greatest need for his services; there is the place where the greatest work requires to be done. Those of you who wish for larger spheres of usefulness, learn that you may develop them out of the material already at hand. Do your best where you are, and no work need be mightier than yours.

THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE: AND HOW TO BUILD IT.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

From the earliest historic ages, in all parts of the world, men have erected temples for religious worship in some form or other. Some of those temples were very crude and very barbaric, and displayed evidences of very small intellectual and spiritual attainment—many of them being so rude in their construction as to be devoid of *all* architectural beauty; again, others were so magnificent that it appeared as though all the wealth of man's artistic nature had been heaped upon them in order to make them very palaces of beauty. Is there any need that we should build temples in which to worship God? Do we require any form or ceremony with which to come before the Eternal Spirit who dwelleth in all things and who liveth and moveth in our own souls? Are religious rites and ceremonies superfluities, or are they useful to us for a while, even though, after a time, their use may be over and their places know them no more?

Our subject this morning is "The Spiritual Temple, and How to Build It."

When we allude to the spiritual temple we mean whatsoever place or whatsoever thing is the shrine of holiness, for God must be infinitely holy, infinitely wise, infinitely loving, as well as infinitely powerful, and, therefore, nothing but truth and love and honor can appear before Him with acceptance. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." This sentence, found in one of the Epistles, seems to us to convey the idea that the early Christians were accustomed to place a very high estimation upon public worship, and no doubt their estimate was none too high. But the necessity for public worship in that day may have been greater than at present, because

in the stormy periods of persecution, when men, women and children were proscribed and persecuted everywhere, when all their goods were taken from them, when their lives were in jeopardy, when their pursuers were ever on the alert to capture them if possible, they could not stand alone; they were altogether too weak to endure without that strength which grows out of union.

Whenever we are in danger we feel our danger less when we have congenial associates. If we are in jeopardy we feel our peril less if we have companions with us than if we are all alone; and no doubt the early Christians, who were in such sore danger, felt the imperative need of assembling together for mutual protection, as well as for mutual edification. It was needful that they should hold their conference meetings, in order that they might talk over the best means of spreading the new faith, which was so dear to them all, and also to invent measures for their own protection; for the law of self-preservation is one of the first laws of nature, which we are commanded by all that is best in ourselves, and safest for society, to obey. To run any unnecessary risks, to expose ourselves to danger when we can benefit no one by doing so, is foolhardiness. It is not bravery. We may admire the man who will dare, amid the perils of shipwreck, all the terrors of the deep, in order to rescue those in danger from a watery grave. We may admire the man who will leap into the flames unprotected by any coat of mail, that he may rescue children, who otherwise would be burned in their beds. But we cannot admire a man who will place himself in an unnecessary position of peril, and thereby tempt God to destroy him. One of

the temptations of Jesus when he was alone with wild beasts and evil spirits in the wilderness, ere he commenced his three years of public ministry, was the temptation to risk his life only that he might stand before the world in the light of a remarkable magician, who had power to expose himself to unheard of dangers, and yet be protected by the power he wielded. We have no right to demand or to expect spiritual protection when we unnecessarily expose ourselves to risks. But whenever we are engaged in a benevolent enterprise we have a perfect right to call upon our angel friends to carry us through all dangers, and especially to trust in the protection of God when we are doing our duty.

There is a great deal of difference in the environment of those who expose themselves from foolish motives, and those who expose themselves for the benefit and salvation of others. When you desire to benefit another you throw around yourself a shield which will protect you from the influences of evil. As soon as you are bent on an errand of mercy, and are determined to elevate the world, you are clad in an armor that is proof against all attacks, and clad in which you may defy the hosts of wickedness. If you lose your physical life, your soul only enters at the right time into a world of larger usefulness, into a sphere of extended liberty. For no one can die at the wrong time when he dies doing his duty. No man can go into the spiritual world uncalled for by the angels when he falls at the post of duty, nobly working for the elevation of the race and the securing of its happiness. We consider that the early Christians and their great teachers were none too earnest in proclaiming the necessity of public worship as a means of protecting and encouraging one another. But there is a necessity for public worship beyond this, and that necessity can probably only be thoroughly understood by those who are somewhat familiar with psychological influences, and with those spiritual powers which are continually working around us. Wherever a company of people gather together, they generate magnetism and form a spiritual sphere. As we have told you oftentimes, spiritual spheres may be carried from place to place; and communicating spirits when they have been questioned closely concerning their abodes, have said that they can live in their houses and carry them with them. They are thus always in heaven, if their surroundings are the outgrowth of a virtuous heart—while hell is equally an outgrowth of man's inner condition. Wherever we are, we are in our own spiritual spheres. We form our own environment, and this is composed of the substance of thought.

You will see the point at which we are aiming—that if a company of persons come togeth-

er with a good object in view, wishing to receive and also to impart good, they form spiritual spheres on the earth, in which dwelleth righteousness, and whence salutary influences may be dispensed far and wide over the globe. You do not, or you ought not, to come here to *listen* to the service, but to take part in it. You have no right to come here or to go anywhere in order to get as much as you possibly can while you give nothing in return. You should come here to give as well as to take; and you will enjoy any public service, and it will do you good, just in proportion as you are desirous of making it do good to others. As you go to church with the determination to get good, in order to dispense good, you will receive a blessing; but when you go only in order that you may grasp something, wishing to receive all the instruction you can, and then use it for your own advantage in the world, public worship will be to you not only unnecessary, but positively injurious; because it will encourage selfishness and cherish inordinate self-love. We have a right to try to get all the instruction we can. We have a right to get all the good we can possibly extract from every man on earth and from every unseen spirit; and the more we get the better, if our desire in the getting, and the use which we make of the possessions when acquired, are laudable and for the elevation of the race. A company of people come into this hall, and by their very contact they stimulate each other, and send each other out into the world to battle with the temptations of life more manfully and successfully than if they had not enjoyed their hallowed union on Sunday morning. You come here and sit side by side, desirous of blessing and of being blessed; by so doing you generate the very elements into which loving spirits can descend. Even though there may be nothing very instructive in the words of the speaker—though you listen to the poorest discourse that was ever delivered, even though you be stone deaf, and cannot hear a word that is said, your heart and mind may be played upon by spiritual beings, as the æolian harp is played upon by the wind. You cannot prevent the wind playing upon that instrument; even so, the wind of the spirit of truth, which bloweth where it listeth, and is unperceived by mortals, is the power which brings the apprehension of truth to the minds of men.

Those who are willing to receive truth always will receive it, and those whose minds are not ready and willing cannot receive it. This is why it is that the eloquent words of many a powerful speaker make no impression upon a portion of his audience, while to others they are filled with the deepest meaning. This is why the sweetest strains of music may fall upon the ear of one and inspire him, and yet produce no impression upon the heart or the mind of an-

other; the latter having no appreciation of sound other than in a very worldly way. Our minds must be alive to heavenly influences, and the doors of our own energies must be thrown open wide, or God's good gifts, though lying around us, will be unappropriated by us, even as all richest wealth of soil may lie buried in uncultivated ground; but our energies not being employed in its cultivation, we may go hungry while living on the most productive spot of earth. Because many persons are stimulated by others, because everything is contagious, public worship is good; one cannot help being stimulated to noble endeavor by the thoughts which are coursing through the minds of others. It is a libel upon the laws of nature to say with Col. Ingersoll, that disease and not good health is contagious. By coming into a healthy assembly, you can catch physical and mental health just as truly as by breathing a tainted atmosphere you may inhale the germs of disease. When we are assembled to help one another, we cannot help being elevated, because holy influences are circulating in the very air we breathe. Our own state of receptivity enables them to work in us and through us, and we are saved by them from a thousand ills. You perceive, then, why it is necessary that young people should be taught to attend some religious gathering; not because they are to receive so very, very much instruction from the words of a minister, which they cannot get from magazines, newspapers, or the library. You may have a discourse published and circulated, but it cannot do people generally as much good to read it as to hear it delivered. You are not benefited by singing alone, as much as by joining your voice in united song. Congregations must sing, as well as listen to the efforts of professional singers.

The truth of the matter is, you must be in a condition to receive before you can receive, and thus a word spoken at a critical moment of your life may turn the whole future tide of your existence, while the same words addressed to you when in a non-receptive condition will make no impression upon your heart. Hence the great benefit which may be derived from public spiritual gatherings is that in those gatherings we are so wrought upon by our surroundings, and so benefited by the influences which are generated and circulated, that we can receive in this living sphere that which we cannot obtain when we are deprived of such healthful gatherings.

Thus every true church, every Spiritual Temple, must be a centre from which hallowing influences are diffused abroad. If the church is not a spiritual centre for practical work; if it does not ally the earth with spiritual spheres in a peculiar way, that church, however sumptuous, however beautiful, however graceful its oratory, goes for naught in the estimation of

the spiritual world, and stands as no true monument of man's devotion to God; it only represents fashion, or Mammon-worship, agreeable truly to Pharisees desirous of putting on the outward semblance of godliness in the spirit of those olden Pharisees who were termed whited sepulchres by Jesus.

An unseen traveler through the streets of many modern cities exclaims: "Behold the many houses which are called houses of God! How many of them are Spiritual Temples?" They represent so much architectural ability, so much ostentatious display. Man proclaims abroad that he worships God; so he dedicates to him some particular portion of the substance which must of necessity belong to God and all humanity.

If by any of your tricks of trade you have amassed a fortune, stolen from the poor in order that you may build a handsome church in the city, do you imagine that God will be satisfied with the house dedicated to him? Every cent which is taken from the poor man in order to enrich the wealthy, everything that adds to your worldly prosperity that has been gained at the sacrifice of your allegiance to conscience, is money stolen out of the treasury of God. For as God requires no money for himself, neither food, nor shelter, nor raiment, nor any material thing, you cannot rob God by going directly and breaking open his safe and taking possession of the money there; but when any poor person is robbed, then God is robbed. We contend that every church which has been endowed by those who have gotten their money unjustly, is only the attempt of some wretched and unhappy conscience to still the tones of its own condemning voice by paying back to God a portion of the amount which has already been stolen from him.

And so with the endowment of all charitable institutions, many of which have only a tendency to keep people in poverty and dependence. Persons who have the means at their disposal to prevent crime and pauperism, are insulting the Infinite as they give unto the distressed merely an asylum in the midst of the distress which their selfishness has occasioned. The work of the future will be the erection of preventive asylums. The work of the future will not be the building of magnificent temples to the honor and glory of God, and endowing them with magnificent gifts, in order that men may be turned from the error of their ways unto righteousness, but institutions in which little children may be taken care of so that they may never become criminals, and, therefore, never need the salvation which is so freely offered to the world in the name of Jesus Christ. The church of to-day is continually making proselytes, and constantly striving to convert men; the mission of ministers is to bring souls to Jesus, and compel them

to renounce their evil doing, and to begin a new life. Ministers of religion, you are doing some good in so far as you are sincere. Every honest man is doing some good, because of his very honesty. The love of humanity in itself is good, and every honorable man is doing good, no matter what doctrine he may preach, no matter what methods he may employ in the advocacy of his doctrines. But there are degrees of good and degrees of usefulness, and so far as we get rid of the atrocious doctrine that men are altogether born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, that they require to be altogether altered before they can get to heaven, and change our theology altogether into a system which tells us that a child starts pure and innocent, and that if his innocence and his purity are protected he need never become a criminal, we shall have struck the key-note to the true plan of salvation. Acknowledging the necessity of all the trials and temptations of life, we may go through all these temptations by exercising self-control without falling into the meshes of iniquity. Let us realize that God's gospel unto all humanity is that their own bodies are his temples, and they can worship him truly only as they develop them into symmetrical and harmonious organizations.

As soon as this divine view of life is the view taken by all the leading teachers of the world, as it is already taken by all practical philanthropists, we shall have in the church a new kind of worship, a new system of theology. Any devout Christian who bows the head every time the name of Jesus is pronounced in the service, will, by comparing this method with the record of the life of Jesus, find that his teachings, divested of all modern excrescences, will harmonize perfectly with this view. What Jesus formerly gave to the few is now to be given to the multitude. What Jesus taught to the few is now to be taught to the many. It will not be the remodeling of the gospel, but its extension, the removal of all excrescences, and the reduction of all religion to a sound, practical effort for the reformation of the world. And in this practical effort for the redemption of mankind we may still maintain our churches, our academies of learning, our concert halls and theatres, our art-galleries and museums, our public schools, and freely circulate our literature. We shall have room for all our paintings, works of art and strains of music, and shall not refuse to cultivate a love of the beautiful anywhere. For the beautiful, in itself, and a beautiful place of instruction, can always exert a more widely extended influence for good than can a crude, poor meeting-house or an illy-ventilated and imperfectly-furnished home. Crude homes suggest the idea of running away from home into a whirlpool of excitement, rather than remaining under the

shelter of the parental roof, there to find all that there is in life most worth living for.

Our Spiritual Temples must, in the first place, be human bodies; in the second place, well regulated homes; and in the third place, good schools, churches and general institutions for united action. If a man tries to begin on the largest scale he may have to decrease to the smaller; but if he begins on the smaller he will increase to the larger. The man who expects to start on the topmost round of the business ladder is likely to fall; all his hopes will be blasted and his prospects wrecked. But that self-denying youth or maiden who will begin at the base in spite of many disadvantages, will rise gradually higher and higher through self-denial and industry to great eminences, never despising the day of small things. Let every man and woman build securely upon the rock of true effort, and their edifices shall never be like the toy castles erected on drifting sand which gives way beneath your feet.

Is there not a pressing need in the world to-day for a recognition of the rights and necessities of children, both born and unborn? Children are the Temples of God, yet undefiled and unpolluted by any act of their own. They may be born into wickedness and vice, or they may be born into holiness. You who are philosophical, and you who are philanthropical, instead of mourning over hereditary evils, or sighing over the origin of sin, exert yourselves to practically remove evil and abolish sin. If children are born in sin, why are they born in sin? They are born in sin because their parents did not obey the laws of nature, and, in a great many instances, their parents did not obey because they did not understand the law.

A great many young men and women enter the matrimonial state with honorable motives and pure intentions, and are desirous of bringing up their children in the ways of usefulness, wishing to lead respectable lives; but they do not know how to perform their duties because they have not been instructed in the laws of nature, and, as the result of ignorance, their children are born in the most pitiable conditions of distress. Instead of taking your child to the church font to be regenerated, let the mother's womb be the baptismal font; and as soon as the child is conceived there will be laid the foundation of a truly beautiful temple, fitted to enshrine the ever-living spirit of God. As fathers and mothers become father-confessors and mother-confessors in their own households—as children learn to confide in their parents, and parents invite their confidences, and explain unto them the truth so far as they are able to bear it—then young men and women may go out into the world knowing the consequences of yielding to temptation. Let not your young people remain in ignorance, or they will be un-

protected against the seductions of the world. As soon as children are born and launched on the sea of life, if their parents cannot or will not take care of them, let them not be left a prey to those terrible influences which overtake the neglected; from the ranks of waifs and strays you cannot wonder that there are so many criminals and so many paupers, and that there is such a vast amount of wickedness in the world to-day.

As soon as any little creature is stranded upon the shores of time, and has no natural parent or guardian to take charge of him, there should be at once an asylum found for him in the home of some one who will incur the responsibility, and will faithfully perform the work of bringing him up in the true way. Public institutions are good in their way; convent and other schools and orphanages are doing a great deal of good; many of the institutions connected with the Catholic Church are most valuable in the absence of more perfect institutions; but no public institution can ever take the place of the home. If the child can be brought up by his own natural parents, their home is the place for him; and if not, are there no men and women who—having no children of their own, (having either had children and lost them, or who loving children have never been blessed with them)—will be ready to take charge of these little ones and bring them up in the path of purity?

The crying need of to-day is the prevention of transgression; instead of allowing men to fall into the clutches of evil, and then rescuing them, we must devise plans to protect from the beginnings of evil. The work of the future will be the prevention of evil. We hear a great deal to-day concerning prison reform and other reformatory movements; those reforms are sorely needed; and far be it from us to detract one iota from the dignity of those who are engaged in them. Investigate every form of cruelty perpetrated upon the unfortunate, and strive for its discontinuance. If a man is a criminal, he can only be attracted to virtue by kindness, by the power of love. If you seem to restore him by harsh measures, you only prevent him from the open commission of sinful acts, because he is afraid he will be found out; he will abstain from enormities; but no man was ever reformed, no man was ever brought into the fold of truth by cruelty; this only makes him deceitful, as he is brought to fear the consequences of open transgression. If a criminal is really to be reformed, and made a blessing to society, he can only be thus restored as the divine influences within him are called into operation, and the power of love alone awakens the inner goodness.

There are some people to-day who say that it is merely a sentimental matter that we are so earnest in insisting upon the doctrine of uni-

versal salvation. We have had conversations with Swedenborgians, who believe in progression in the future life for some souls, but who also believe in retrogression for others; these have told us that while a great many will be saved, a great many will go to hell, and remain in hell to all eternity, but they will get enjoyment there, and will be made comfortable. This is less unreasonable than to imagine that they are to be tormented to all eternity in order to gratify the vengeance of an angry God, who will do nothing to reform them, according to the Calvinistic view of the case. It will be far better to believe, as the Swedenborgians do, that those who remain in hell will be of some use, even though their uses cannot be understood by us, rather than that they will be subjected to endless misery to satisfy a revengeful God. But while the Swedenborgian idea is in advance of the Orthodox conception, and a great improvement upon Calvinism, it is altogether unsatisfactory, and is radically wrong in its influence upon practical life. If I believed that there are people in this world to-day who are going to remain evil to all eternity, and that God will make them contented with a course of iniquity, and will find a use for their sin; if I believed it to be a part of the Divine plan that some people should remain forever in the abyss of wickedness, and that they may in that state be of some good in the universe, then my ardor would be altogether dampened, and when I had work to perform on behalf of the fallen I would think perhaps after all God does not care whether or no they are reformed; perhaps God does not want them reformed; perhaps he will have some use for their depravity.

Instead of believing in the good God, as soon as I believe in a God who has a use for everlasting wickedness as well as in a God who has a use for everlasting good, I at once lose my heart in practical efforts to reform the world, for after all I may be working for others as God does not wish them to be worked for; if there must be everlasting evil, and he can make use of it, then all our energies for the elevation of the race are necessarily crippled. But if I look out on the broad fields of humanity and endeavor by the furthest stretch of spiritual contemplation to take in the unnumbered spheres of human souls, and if embracing the whole universe, or as much of it as I can, I cling to the ideal belief that every soul is dear to him, and that God is anxious that every one should be elevated, and that he has implanted pure desires within all, feeling that God's spirit dwelleth within every child, I know that I am made use of by the eternal goodness, and that I am an instrument in the hands of a mighty power to rescue men; and immediately I appeal to their finer sensibilities, I know that it is the divine will that these diviner sensibilities should be

called out into perfect action. In all our conduct with the depraved we need to be Universalists in the very broadest sense of that term, in order that we may bend all our energies to the great work of man's salvation. We contend that our work to-day is the improvement of the human species, the elevation of man, and that so far as outward ceremonies can contribute to this end, let them be advocated and continued.

The traveler in Italy may wander through Rome, and, gazing upon St. Peter's, admiring its colossal magnificence, sigh for a while over the corruptions which are connected with the system which is typified by that gorgeous temple. He, remembering that in the days of Luther, when the Protestant reformation commenced, a noble monk protested against the sale of indulgences while this splendid temple was being built through the extortion of money from the pockets of the poor and superstitious people, in order to fill the coffers of the church, may pause for a moment and ask: Of what use is all this vast expenditure, and what good is this splendid temple? Can God bless those who gather in a temple which was builded nominally in his honor, through people being wronged and defrauded? Suddenly all dark thoughts vanish, as the lights and shades alternate in solemn and grand variety in that magnificent structure. He feels that he is surrounded by hosts of unseen worshippers who have been benefited alike by their own efforts and the desires of their neighbors to receive good in that place long, long ago. And as he feels that beneath all this pomp and ceremony human hearts have long continued and still continue to strive for goodness, he is impressed with the sovereign efficacy of art itself, melted even to tears and moved to greater holiness of action as he gazes upon the gorgeousness of the architecture and the perfection of the minutest portion of the structure. He feels that the very soul of Michael Angelo is now working for the erection of a broader and grander temple yet to be established among men, and that he, with his myriads of unseen colleagues, is inspiring him through his love of the beautiful, speaking through all that is most glorious and magnificent in the productions of his master mind. The sheer beauty and magnificence of the building itself, apart from all its associations, makes it for us a temple of God, and we are brought face to face with the love and power of man, through the creation of man's genius, and are reminded of the possible achievements of the race. Standing there in the temple erected by so mighty a mind, embracing art, we are blessed and inspired, as we feel that we may become even Angelos ourselves, though we build not a temple of brick, mortar, marble or stone, but one of the spirit in our midst, wherein men may come to worship whensoever they will,

and be fettered by none of the limitations of ecclesiastical bondage. We may even be greater than he ever was.

To the traveler wandering through the numberless apartments of the Vatican and gazing upon the artistic beauties of the Sistine Chapel, however unnatural many of the paintings may seem to be, if interested in the beautiful, art itself will surpass its embodiment. Angel Ministry, as represented in Raphael's masterpiece, "The Transfiguration," portrays humanity as it stands revealed and glorified. All that there is of intrinsic merit in an artist's production, is of itself an inspiration to noble living. We are reminded by it of how beautiful this world may be, and how transcendently fair our lives may become if our energy is only expended in decorating the true Temple of God, by embellishing the shrine which conceals the Holy of Holies. We are impelled to turn away from the structure and paintings and go out into the city; and as we go we feel more charitably disposed toward the ragged children and their pauper parents who are out there begging; we feel that even in the lowliest of them God dwells, as he never dwells in the tabernacle of any Catholic altar. We are thrown out into the world with higher resolves and mightier projects, and we feel the inspiration of a Raphael coming unto us and telling us to paint in living colors the forms of Spiritual Truth which are evolved from our souls, and to persevere in our labors until human lives shall be temples of the living God indeed. Having taken our last look at the beautiful, having been inspired with all the good that art can inspire in us, let us go into the houses of the poor and there find desecrated temples and forsaken altars, which it is our mission to restore. Houses of iniquity multiply; gin-palaces and rum-shops increase; abodes of licentiousness are freely encouraged in a land which professes the religion of Christ. We know that the only true method of leading men away from places of infamy is by making home so fair and attractive that it will be to them the most fascinating spot on earth—"sweet, sweet home," being infinitely sweeter than all other places. Men, women and children will not be willing to leave their homes for darker and more dangerous places, even though they be more brilliant to the gaze of the outside world. Almost every young man or woman who begins a downward career begins with becoming dissatisfied with home; when parents are too exacting, when they suppress natural enjoyments, when they are too severe, when they refuse to take their children to places of innocent amusement, they sow the seeds of infamy and disgrace. Homes must be attractive and natural; and all the adornments of home must be suggestive of nature in her most attractive forms. Above all,

let your attention be paid to the early training and culture of your children, that their bodies and their minds may be God's living Temples, wherein dwelleth the Spirit of Truth.

How, then, may we build the Spiritual Temple? We may have something to say on another occasion concerning the desirability of erecting special places of spiritual resort and on the cultivation of spiritual gifts, and the value of houses where men and women may come together in order that they may benefit one another. But the thought which we desire to leave with you to-day is this: That the human body is of infinitely more value than the church, and that the home wherein men dwell every day and every night is far more valuable than a temple specially dedicated to God. We tell you that it is not necessary to spend your money upon gorgeous ecclesiastical edifices. We say give God all the houses; give him not only a hundred temples in a city, but let every house be a church; and there, around the family altar, surrounded by all the endearments of affection, let the children rise up and learn to develop in wisdom and love under the fostering care of a wise father and tender mother, truly kind and truly wise. Many a little child kneels at his mother's knee and says: "Oh, God!" and looking into the mother's eyes, sees all that he can understand of divinity shining out through those beautiful and tender orbs. Many a little girl kneels down at her father's side and repeats "Our Father who art in heaven," feeling that that earthly father is all the God she is capable of understanding. If her father be a true and noble man, if the mother be a noble and virtuous woman, then it will truly be through that mother and father that

the divinest influences may reach the child; for while the child cannot understand the mystery of an all-pervading spirit, nor enter into theological speculations, and know that God is all in all, that God is everywhere, God in father and God in mother is God manifested in the flesh, and as God, after all, is infinite goodness, wherever goodness comes from is God's seat; whatever is good is from God. Let all parents become ladders leading their children higher and higher, nearer and nearer unto God.

Let us first build a Spiritual Temple at home; then let us go forth into the world, resolving to make other homes the most beautiful places on earth; and because of the inexperience of the young who are intrusted to our charge, let us resolve to preserve them from all temptations to the commission of vice, by cultivating in them a love for all that is beautiful and fair.

This is the work for your missionaries to begin: the work of bringing together those who are in sympathy with each other, to work practically. Bring your easily-led astray people into an atmosphere which is redolent of purity; bring those who cannot stand alone into an assembly of men who are resolved to redeem their brethren, and when those weak and tempted ones go out into the world, they having met with you will be strong, because your magnetism and will-power will help them, and your good resolves will attract, and enable exalted spiritual presences to abide with them. A spiritual temple must rise till it covers the earth; and when it shall have assumed such proportions and includes all humanity, then, and only then, shall we see the true church of God, a spiritual temple in which love and truth abide eternally.

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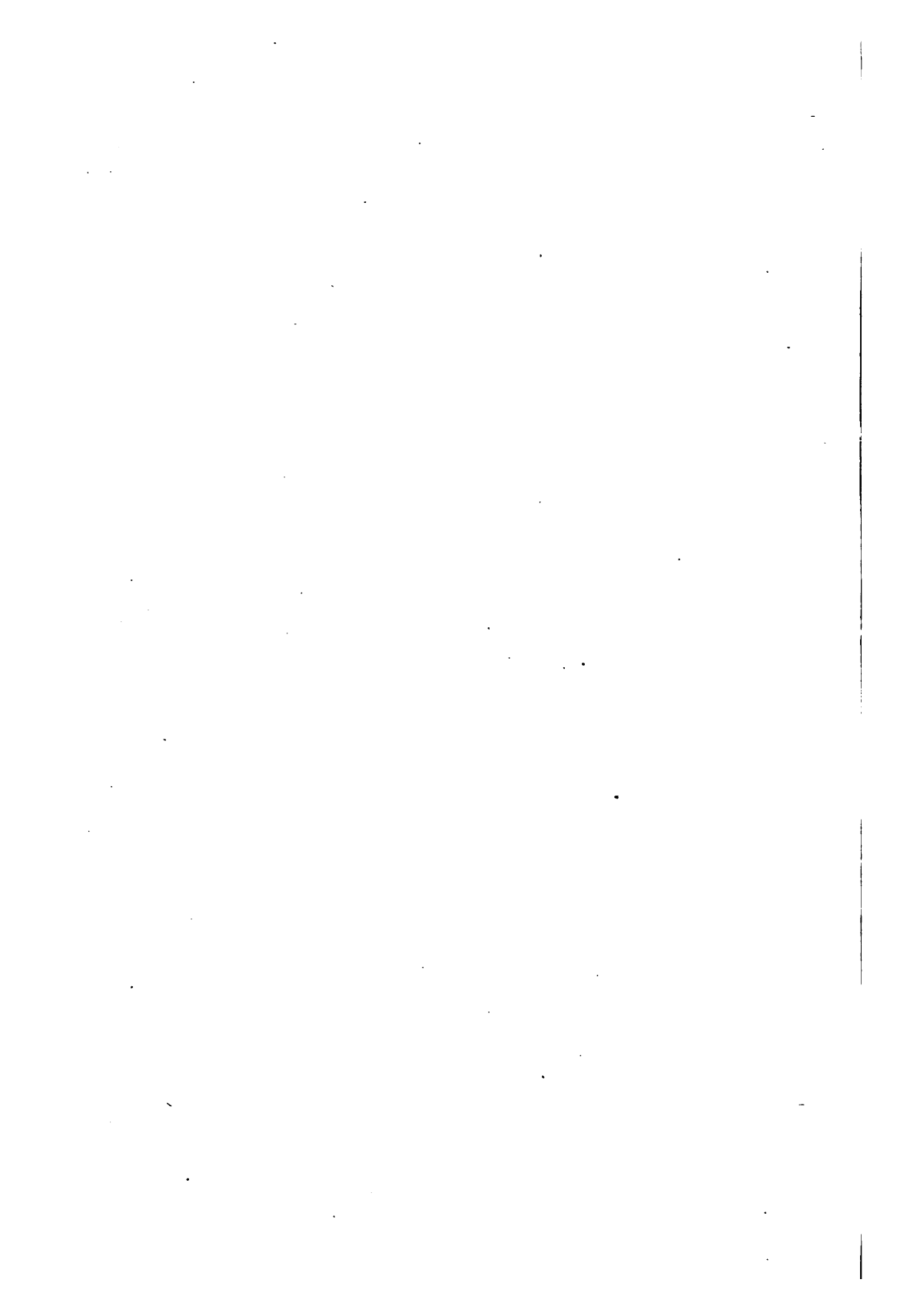
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HOUSES OF GOD AND GATES OF HEAVEN.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881

Last Sunday morning the subject of our discourse was "The Spiritual Temple: And How to Build It." We told you then that to-day we would continue to follow out the line of thought which our topic last Sunday morning started.

Whatever may be the importance of religious forms and ceremonies; however valuable may be the ordinances of religion; however much help and comfort we may gain from the assembling of ourselves together in consecrated places, at stated intervals, the Home is always more important than the Church, and the daily life is far more valuable than the Sabbath day worship. The old idea of God was that the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Jewish Jehovah, was confined to certain places; that he lived amid the mountains, and therefore could not defend his people when they were fighting in the valleys. He, selecting for himself certain portions of the earth which were pleasant to him, there established his abodes, so that the Jewish tribes were obliged to go up to the Temple in order that they might find their God, and when they were traveling in the wilderness a movable tabernacle, constructed after a divine plan, was necessary to afford them a house of worship. In later times synagogues were established all over Judea, or wherever they got possession of lands. And in all those synagogues they expected that they would find their God in a certain peculiar sense. But the fullness of divine revelation was confined to Solomon's Temple. There, amid the beauties of untold magnificence, in the most glorious courts; there, in the holy of holies, surmounting all the vessels in the innermost courts of the Temple, with a halo of divine effulgence, the Sheki-

nah appeared, reminding them that God was ever-present among them. Only once a year did the priest enter into the holy of holies, and then the only priest allowed to enter was the High Priest, and when he offered sacrifices in the innermost courts of the Temple all the people were kept standing outside, they being considered too unholy to enter the sacred place. This idea was by no means confined to the Jews. It was the idea of all early historic people, and is yet held by most Orientals; all the religious systems of the Orient are permeated with the belief that God is confined to certain places, and that certain forms of ritual can bring man unto him as nothing else can.

An aristocracy in religion always existed, a certain few being called out of the world in order that they might minister in sacred things, the majority of the citizens being left to perform secular duties and to obey the injunctions of the priesthood without at all questioning what they commanded. It is not for us this morning to discuss the legitimacy or the illegitimacy of such a state of things in the days long gone by. The reason may undoubtedly be found in the knowledge of the condition of early peoples. It was then absolutely necessary that the majority of men should devote almost all of their time and energy to the cultivation of the soil in order to provide for their daily physical necessities generally. For if they did not do so they would have had no food to eat, no houses to dwell in, and no clothing to wear. As the earth was then in a cruder condition than it is to-day, and as the human mind was by no means as far unfolded as it is at present, the amount of work which you can perform in one hour with your labor-saving contrivances and

with your average intelligence could not have been performed by very ancient peoples in two or three days. They were entirely devoid of assistances which you are freely blessed with and employ. And thus it was necessary that a certain few should devote themselves *entirely* to spiritual things, for the mass of the people, being engrossed in material pursuits, would have no means whereby they could directly commune with the spiritual world, were it not for these consecrated media. For let it be understood that if any one devotes himself to the special work of revealing spiritual truth to the world—if any one desires to develop as a medium and to stand before the public a specially endowed and cultivated instrument, the energy which he would use in ordinary secular duties must be conserved and put to spiritual uses, enabling him thereby to enlighten the people. Frequently, however, at this day, when material duties do not absorb *all* our time, we can commingle spiritual with material work freely. You are daily moving among highly mediumistic people, who, though spiritual teachers, yet at the same time are mechanics or artisans; we shall discover, however, on close observation, that whenever the vitality becomes accustomed to flow in one particular channel, no matter whether it is a spiritual, intellectual, or a physical channel, that it will continue to flow in that channel unless it is restrained from doing so, as means are employed for producing remarkable alterations in the general constitution of the individual.

All the early peoples, all nations which have produced great magicians, have found out that physiological and psychological changes had to be produced in the bodies and minds of those who had devoted themselves to secular pursuits, if they desired to undertake a special spiritual work. And therefore only after laborious initiatory discipline were ordinary people able to occupy any positions among the priests and mediums of the East. At this hour we consider that a few are needed to stand aloof from the ordinary pursuits of life in order that they may devote themselves exclusively to communion with the spiritual world. But most people in the present age, blessed with so many modern conveniences as you are, and with such diverse attainments, can wisely and beautifully couple the performance of secular duties with the cultivation of spiritual gifts. The most perfect life undoubtedly is a rounded sphere, not a one-sided affair. The most perfect man is not the man of one idea, but the man of multitudinous ideas.

Our idea of angelhood is only that of perfected manhood and womanhood. It is the idea of the human race so unfolded that we can all engage in varied pursuits, and can so change our activities from time to time that one set of fac-

ulties will never become abnormally developed, and no one faculty will be stunted. Undoubtedly the time will come when you all may occupy inclusive positions. As painters, sculptors, inventors, musicians, etc., probably some will always shine, but the race itself may be eventually composed of such eminently practical people that all can enter into the minor details of domestic management without losing one atom of their specific grandeur. Undoubtedly the perfect condition of manhood is a condition of perfect roundness, all organs being equally unfolded—no excesses and no defects. That is the ultimate state of mankind; that is the dream of the future; that is to be the condition of humanity in the golden age—the millennial epoch which is yet to come. In days long gone by, very, very few, if any, attained to this. Indeed, our opinion, individually speaking, is that no one ever did. If you have closely studied the life of Jesus you will find that his life was not an entire life. The life of Jesus was a perfectly moral, a beautifully pure life, and a life quite as entire as a life in his day possibly could be. When he lived among men his life was so far above ordinary lives, that the liver of such a life was subjected to every form of persecution, even to death itself, on account of his spiritual attainments.

The life of Jesus is to us a prophecy of the life of man in the yet far future. The example of the life of Jesus, so far as we can discover it, is the very highest pattern which could be given to the world when he existed, and as an exalted spirit, as an enfranchised soul, and as a spirit of truth who is to come again, he assures you that his attainments may be yours. He may yet manifest in a more perfect embodiment the soul's ideal of a perfect life; when on earth his purity is so beautiful that we can never conceive of its being surpassed by mortal; but so far as the record goes Jesus does not seem to have been a peculiarly intellectual man. He was remarkably spiritual, and throughout the entire record of his life we cannot find one moral blemish. His conduct toward his fellow-creatures on every occasion was marked by the most peculiarly deep insight into the needs of human nature; he seems to have been a peculiarly sensitive and tender-hearted man, with a stern sense of right. Jesus always understood how to combine contemplation and prayer with practical service, and, therefore, not only in the synagogue and on the mountain-top does he shine forth as the exemplar of humanity, but also at the wedding feast and the social board he is equally at home, quite as much so as he is when engaged in the performance of some religious rite. It has been and is objected to by many that Jesus was never married; that he did not enter into all the relations of social life, and therefore for all

people and for all conditions of life he does not seem to have set us that perfect example which shall be set by some one who may arise in the future. Those who arise in the future may be virtually inspired by Jesus himself, and through them may appear a more perfect manifestation of his soul. For judging his life by its perfect morality and spiritual beauty, we may readily believe that the potencies of completion were within his soul, and that all the possibilities of rounded greatness were in that nature, the limitations of his life being occasioned rather by the circumstances of his life and the needs of the hour than by the absence of the materials in himself needful to afford the soul a perfect means of expression.

In past days, religion was too much separated from daily life, and to-day we are trying to evolve a state of society in which religion and work shall be so interblended that there shall be no distinction made between going to church and sweeping a room, in a religious sense. Man must grow to realize that everything he does for the well-being of his family and the cultivation of his own frame is as much an act of worship to God as the performance of any peculiarly ecclesiastical duty. Our religion for the future must be of such a nature that our House of God and our Gate of Heaven shall be everywhere, so that man need not even cross the road to enter God's temple. Our religion must be so altogether devoid of ideas which limit God, that we shall find him everywhere, and know that we have only to prepare ourselves to meet him by the honorable discharge of every duty. We have to go nowhere to find God, but we have to develop in ourselves the condition to perceive him. When the sun is shining, you do not have to go anywhere to find the sun, because if an aperture in any portion of your house is opened, its light will stream in. But if there is a fault in the construction of your house, the light does not shine in, though it is everywhere around you; the fault does not lie in the absence of light, but in the limitations which you have established to obstruct the light. You do not have to go anywhere in order to find air, and yet there are many buildings so constructed, so badly ventilated, that persons are almost suffocated in them even when the wind is blowing a perfect gale outside.

So with all divine presences, and so with all angelic manifestations. We do not need to go anywhere to find the spiritual world; we do not need to summon angels to our sides by any special invocation, or to call upon God in prayer so as to make God ready to hear and to answer our petitions; prayers and observances are only our attempts to construct windows in ourselves, and keep them open so that the Divine Light and the Divine Wind may shine and blow in, playing upon us, illumi-

nating our pathway, and cleansing us from all defilement. We strive to grasp the idea of an all-pervading Deity, though we are assured that no human spirit is ubiquitous: No angel is everywhere at once, but we cannot be anywhere where some angel or some spiritual friend is not. We cannot dispense with the idea of individual deities in our way to perfection; we cannot assure ourselves in regard to the personality of an Infinite Spirit, the question of a divine personality being altogether too large for human thought. It baffles us at every turn, and all attempts either to prove or disprove the personality of the Deity are ignominious failures. All are obliged to admit, "We really *know* nothing about it; we only talk and think concerning it." We may change our opinions over and over again; but not having searched out all creation, not having found the limits of existence, we cannot say whether there is or is not a personal Ruler of the universe, and we shall certainly not undertake to make a positive statement either on one side or on the other; but as God appeared unto men of old, even so he may appear unto us to-day. As certain gods bore the names of those unto whom they appeared, so Jehovah is especially called the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. And as Jacob in a spiritual frame of mind, even though sleeping on a stony pillow in the wilderness, was enabled to see angels ascending and descending, and when alluding to those angels spoke of them as the "Lord," so may we realize that there are individual beings who, though unseen, live and care for us, who are never far away from us; and very frequently that messenger who comes to you with the tenderest message and with the holiest benediction and appropriate measure of truth, is some pure and noble spirit whom your father or your mother dearly loved; some one who was dear unto your ancestors; some one who has been connected with your family through various generations, and who now cares for you with almost infinite tenderness. By infinite we simply mean beyond human measurement. This messenger will come unto you as your especial Lord, and as your patron.

The great mistake which has always been made by theologies is that theologies have limited man, compelling him to gaze with the eyes of others upon the universe. I have no objection to your telling me that Jesus Christ is your Saviour, or that he is the Saviour of your world, but I have a very great objection to your telling me that there is no other Saviour and that there is no other world. I have no objection whatever to your making the statement that you cannot be saved unless you believe in Jesus Christ, but if you tell us that no one else can be saved unless they believe in Jesus Christ in the way in which you believe in him, then your

sweeping assertion is entirely outside of the limits of the spirit of wisdom and of charity. If salvation depended upon a faith in Jesus Christ, then every person who ever lived upon the earth would have a right to know everything about Jesus Christ, and unless every person who ever lived in the world has had the scheme of salvation unfolded unto him, salvation cannot come unto him through Jesus Christ exclusively, in the sense in which it is taught by the churches. If God leaves one soul without the knowledge needed by that soul, if all must believe in Christ in order to be saved, and all have not even heard of him, then God is simply a tyrant, utterly unworthy of our affection and worship. If every individual upon the face of the earth knew the story of the life of Jesus, and had an opportunity of believing in him, then salvation might justly come through an intellectual apprehension of the work of Jesus in the redemption of the world. But as special inspired messengers have been respectively sent to various portions of the earth, all nations have their own saviours, their own laws, their own prophets. False gods or idols are undeveloped spirits and earthly passions, when allowed to get the better of man's moral sense or spiritual intuition, as he seeks for earthly happiness and glory rather than for spiritual unfolding. The following of Belial and Beelzebub, a term employed in the Scriptures, is only used to designate that form of depraved idol-worship which places the lower creature above the spiritual nature.

If there is in man a tendency to enslave himself by obedience to the letter; and yet more, if he will commune with the spiritual world simply to advance his material interests, and that unjustly, then communication with the spirit-world is diabolism; it is witchcraft, necromancy—any form of iniquity; but when man desires to hold communion with any spiritual being in order to receive truth, or do good in the world, he never asks in vain. Whether the answer comes in the way he desires or not, a blessing comes into his soul. The very desire to receive truth in order to bestow it on others, in itself brings a blessing. Let us not be over-anxious concerning the individuality of spiritual guides, or of any who come unto us from unseen realms. Every true thought, every devout desire, brings its own answer and benediction.

How may we make our houses Houses of God and Gates of Heaven? We have churches in our land to-day without number; but churches often appear as rival institutions, assailing one another in support of some peculiar dogmas. All Christian churches profess to owe allegiance to Jesus Christ; they all bear the name of Christian, and they all tell you that through Christ, in some mysterious way, the world is to be redeemed. And yet these

churches cannot possibly agree among themselves. Why so? Merely because they have established themselves upon an intellectual limitation, having built themselves upon the limited ideas which are born of intellectual research. Creeds do not grow, but men's minds do; and therefore men's minds stretch out beyond the creed, and the creed only remains as a bone of contention.

Dr. Thomas, in Chicago, has been endeavoring to defend himself against the charges brought against him for heresy, and he cannot do it. Dr. Thomas could not consistently remain in the Methodist Church unless the creed of that church be altogether changed. Methodism says: "You must believe in total depravity, and salvation only through the blood of Christ." The Methodist Church does not tell you that God is not willing to save every one, but it does tell you that God will not save any one in any other way than through that individual's belief in Jesus Christ. Now the Rev. Dr. Thomas has been endeavoring to prove that he can stretch this creed, and yet remain in the church. But creeds were never made of elastic, but always of iron; they cannot be stretched, and therefore the creed is found to be too narrow and binding to allow freedom too liberal and whole-souled a man. So he must go out of Methodism because it will not advance and allow the holy spirit of God to continue to unfold the truth as Jesus promised that spirit should. If the Methodist Church was in vital union with the teachings of the New Testament Evangelists, and the New Testament is any true record of Jesus, then that church might grow, and grow, and grow without ceasing; for while spiritual truths are never altered, admiration for the ethical teachings of Jesus, which teach us to do unto others as we desire others to do unto us, need never prevent changes in intellectual aspects of truth. A change in intellectual aspects is an entirely different thing from a change in morals. We can change our intellectual views of Jesus without involving a moral change. Morality is simply this: to live the very highest life you possibly can in your present circumstances; to avail yourselves of all possible information, and to strain every energy to the uttermost to use that information for the betterment of the human race. That is morality pure and simple—the determination to get all the good we can in order to dispense that good for the elevation of the human family. Therefore it is immoral to close your eyes against any new light. It is immoral to refuse to investigate whatever appeals to you, and until you have found out whether there is truth or falsehood in any system, you cannot, from a moral point of view, either agree or disagree with it. Now, all the creeds of the churches are simply crystallizations of bygone attainments of men.

John and Charles Wesley, as moralists, were Methodists, because their Methodism was for them a sacred ark which contained as much of the Divine word as had ever been communicated to them. But John and Charles Wesley themselves protested against the prevailing doctrines of the Church which were then rife in the land. During their earthly lives they fought against the doctrine of the predestination of some to eternal life and others to eternal death. They fought against the errors of Calvinism, and boldly proclaimed the universal love of God instead of his partial love.

Their every conception of God, their every view of truth was in advance of the prevailing conceptions which they contended against, and was for them the very highest possible embodiment of truth; that which they sincerely believed constituted the most perfect creed which they could possibly form or could assent to with the light which they then possessed. But if John and Charles Wesley are honored because they departed from the errors of Calvinism, if they were justified in leaving the principles of Calvinism and in proclaiming the universality of the Divine love, why should not such a man as Dr. Thomas be regarded as one of the most faithful followers of Wesley, because he will go still further, and not only truly say with Wesley that God is willing to save all, but also able to save all, and that he is not only willing and able, but determined that all shall be saved, having put into every human being a nature so divine that in spite of imperfection and failure no human soul can ever stray so far away from the Father's house that, as a returning prodigal, he may not be welcomed back and be met by that Father with open arms as tenderly as though he had never strayed from his doors?

Dr. Thomas is doing to-day exactly what John and Charles Wesley did when Methodism commenced its career. And because he is following in their footsteps he is considered a heretic, even by some a blasphemer, and is to be turned out of the church. Why is it? Because whenever a church begins to lose the spirit of the great man who was its founder, and forms a restrictive creed, then that church begins steadily to sow the seeds of its own spiritual death. As long as a creed is in advance of prevailing creeds, it being a step higher than the ordinary position of the churches, the church having that creed continues to thrive. But just so soon as the people at large are brought up to the standard of that church, if it stands still and erects a fence, which no one can climb over without leaving the fold, those who remain inside dwindle in numbers, as the more vigorous minds go out into new and broader pastures. Methodism is striking its own death-knell, by refusing to allow men to do in this day what Wesley did in his. And as it departs from

the spirit of those great and good men who founded it, it is like a branch of the vine which has been detached from its parent stem; it refuses to grow, and being stunted by the letter, the spirit flows out and runs in other channels, bearing away the best men and women into larger fields of research and activity. Universalism, denominationally speaking, is declining in America, but Universalist ideas are advancing everywhere. Dr. Miner and other Universalist ministers have stated correctly that Universalist ideas have permeated other churches and leavened the community. Sectarian Universalism is almost at a standstill, because the majority of other churches have come almost up to its standard. Universalism, in a sectarian sense, cannot continue to grow. It seems strange that those who are willing to meet everybody else on equal terms in the kingdom of heaven, will not do so on the earth. If Universalists are to meet everybody and shake hands with them in the kingdom of heaven, they surely should do the same thing on earth in the sense of gladly welcoming all who are endeavoring to grasp truth. Swedenborgianism was a great advance upon the religion of the day. But even Swedenborgianism, as Methodism and Universalism, is now at a standstill, because Swedenborgians have done what Swedenborg did not; that is, they have formed a strict creed. If our churches are to be made Houses of God and Gates of Heaven, they must be places to which men may resort in perfect freedom and open their souls to all heavenly influences. When a man or woman is called to the platform or the pulpit, he or she must speak out nothing short of honest convictions, delivering to the people whatever is given from above, or from within; thus alone can teachers feed the necessities of the people.

No church has any right to be angry with its minister because that minister says he does not believe all that is in the Bible. If the minister does not believe it, he ought to say so. But woe unto the man who does not believe, but who pretends that he does. No church can be a House of God or a Gate of Heaven if that church is not an assembly of thoroughly honest people who are true to their convictions, however mistaken and limited they may be in some of their thoughts. When they are determined to use the light which they have, the time will quickly come when further light will shine in upon them.

The prevailing tendency of this age is toward the discountenance of all dogmatic teaching; we are not anticipating, with any degree of fear, a moral interregnum, but we do perceive the very near approach of a complete ecclesiastical interregnum. Undoubtedly in America the time will soon come when the church at large will be held in as little esteem as the Roman Catholic church was in France

during the French Revolution, at the close of the last century. We truly believe that no unruly mob will endanger property, or perpetrate acts of violence in the streets, as they did in France under the assumed name of freedom. We certainly trust and believe that people are now sufficiently advanced to understand that freedom never requires you to invade the rights of another. We certainly trust and believe that Liberals of to-day will allow other people to believe all that they wish to believe, provided they do not strive to coerce them into agreeing with them. But while we trust and believe that there will be no violent hostility manifested to others in this enlightened age, the time will assuredly come when the churches, as they now exist, will lose their hold on the people. Men have received already from the standpoint of the churches all the truth which olden dogmas enshrine. Men are drifting away from the churches; everywhere young people are leaving the Sunday school, and are not joining the church. Churches on the whole are on the decline; for while the number of churches in certain places is greater than some years ago, church-membership does not increase in proportion to the increase of population. The Roman Catholic church in America is not really increasing; the number of people who belong to it in America is greater than formerly, but the majority of these have been imported from abroad, or else they are the children of those who came here from abroad, and who have been baptized into the church, and are too young to have any opinion or voice in the matter of their own religion.

We find that in churches where children are admitted, the absolute number, on the roll of membership, may easily be swelled; but the churches, as a rule, are not growing stronger through adult membership. They lose their hold upon the people because of their iron creeds. Those creeds were good enough three or four hundred years ago, but they are terribly false to-day. Is that a strange statement? Any one who has studied science in any of its branches knows full well that the old scientific text-books will not do now. Take a text-book of two or three hundred years ago and give it to a medical student of to-day, and you will be laughed at by his professor. Old text-books were good in their time. They embodied the most advanced ideas of the best scientific thinkers of that period; they represented the limit of the intelligence of the men who studied science two hundred years ago; and without those text-books a point could never have been arrived at whence we can appreciate those which display greater knowledge than our ancestors; just as we can never get up stairs to the fourth floor without passing the first, second and third floors; just as we can

never get to the top of a ladder by a sudden spring, but are obliged to walk up, round after round, so we can only arrive at truth by slow degrees. In ascending a mountain, gazing around you at the surrounding scenery, though all you can possibly see may be a very small part of the surrounding country, it is the most that can be beheld from the eminence which you have attained. Even so in religion, in philosophy, in science, in every form of thought. We should not condemn the men or women who boldly stand forward to give their ideas to the world in spite of ostracism and martyrdom, no matter how limited those ideas may be. We have no fault to find with Martin Luther, who protested against the errors of his time, though he taught justification by faith as we cannot teach it to-day. From his standpoint he was right; he saw just as much of the spiritual horizon as his eminence allowed him to see; he took such views of life as were necessary for him to take, in order that others who came after him might take higher views. If we are to build Houses of God and Gates of Heaven, house after house may be pulled down until the great Spiritual Temple shall be erected in which all truth-seekers may worship together; gate after gate may be opened, and as we pass from the outer into the inner courts, we shall enjoy revelations altogether new and strange, often conflicting with our former intellectual impressions—just as much so as the scientific experiments of to-day entirely overturn the best theories and practices of the best scientists of days gone by. We draw the widest lines of demarcation between religion and intellectual thought about religion. The base of morality never changes and never can change. And yet an action which is moral in one age is immoral in the next, because only that action which is in accordance with our highest knowledge is the most moral action which we can perform.

We go further and state that if you shoot a man, feeling that it is your duty to do so to protect the interests of society and secure the safety of your fellow-beings, that action is a moral action for you at the time; whereas, as you rise to a higher point, you can do a nobler deed and may see that all murder is out of harmony with the true spirit of love. The day will come when all warfare will be regarded as an abomination; when you will no longer erect statues in honor of soldiers who have slain their comrades. And yet to-day you cannot but admire Washington (though a man of war), and indeed all soldier chiefs who have slain men in the interest of liberty, for in the fierce throes of the struggle for liberty men's consciences justified them in slaying the few so that the many might be made free. You glory in your war between the Northern and the Southern States, because that war resulted in

the emancipation of millions of slaves. Is not the time coming when the weapons of your warfare will not be carnal, and when the sheer force of truth and the power of the soul will enable you to destroy all prejudices? Is not the time coming when the mightiest men will be giants in intellect and saints in spirit? When you will control the passions of your fellow-men by spiritual force, thereby making insurrection impossible, owing to the supremacy of spiritual power which will accompany every great reformer and teacher? Jesus was a greater man than Washington. He was greater than any general or any valiant hero who ever shed human blood, because his force was the force of the soul and his power in the world was the power of the spirit of love. A man is moral who uses to the extent of his ability all the power that is developed within him, but the coming man, the higher man, is the man who will entirely subordinate physical influences to the command of his soul, rendering warfare an impossibility. Every day we are reminded of the progress of the spirit; every issue of the daily newspaper shows up the folly of attempting to redress the woes of the world through an appeal to the passions of human nature. Those men who are striving to secure liberty to persecuted Ireland are doing, to the best of their ability, a work which they are divinely commissioned to perform. But just so long as they are wandering in the meshes of ignorance and calling men together that they may provoke them to indignation against Government, they are not doing the best thing. The time will come when indignation-meetings will not be held, and when any great reformer will only have to step into an assembly of those who oppress the poor, and overcome them; he will melt them to tears and cause them to see the errors of their ways and to reform their doings. Instead of getting up Land Leagues and all sorts of organizations we shall work through the spirit, and through the sheer power of love conquer injustice.

When the time does come for men to live amicably with one another, it will be because every home is a House of God and a Gate of Heaven. Too often parents leave to the Sunday-school teacher and the minister the duty of instructing their children in religion. Many send their children to school and consider that they have done their duty by them because they have not neglected their education, but do not many parents exclaim with sorrow, "I have spent a fortune on my child's education, and have put him in the way of gaining all knowledge, and yet my child comes home from college only an accomplished profligate." You may do very well to leave the secular instruction of your children to the State; you may leave their theological instruction, if you wish them to be

instructed in theology, to the ministers; but their religious, their moral instruction must be imparted by the parent. No parent and no guardian can possibly frame an excuse by saying, "I am not sufficiently educated to instruct my children morally," because it requires no external education whatever to do so. The boot-black can be just as moral as the President of the United States; a poor man who cannot sign his own name may be just as honest, just as morally and spiritually true as a professor of science in the greatest college conceivable. And as moral and spiritual unfoldment does not depend upon intellect but only upon character, every man may be a builder of a House of God and a Gate of Heaven. The greatest requirement of the present age is for men and women to understand themselves—to bring forth children in godliness is the greatest need of the hour. The problem of generation, instead of regeneration, is the great problem for modern science and religion to solve. The great work before the reformer to-day is to see that children are born right. According to most churches we are born wrong and afterward must be set right. The great question before the world to-day is the education of the parent to properly conceive children, and the recognition of the human body as the Temple of God. Now it is impossible for any one to be truly moral and a benefactor of society so long as his body is diseased and he is indulging in habits which unduly stimulate the lower propensities. The very food that we eat, the clothes that we wear, the air that we breathe—all these things shape our characters and affect our conduct, making it either possible or impossible for our souls and minds to express themselves in our outward life.

You know we do not teach that the spirit is evolved from matter. We teach the preëxistence of the soul. We acknowledge that the spirit itself is the cause of all outward formations. But because we teach this we do not teach that the spirit as long as it dwells in a material tabernacle is independent of matter. We do not teach that a room makes a man because a man is in the room; neither do we teach that a body makes a soul because a soul is in a body. Here is, for instance, a room with a window in it, and a man in the room, but the glass of the window is painted black. You pass the house, but do not see the man; in order to see him, you do not have to make any change in the man, but in the window. You must scrape away the black paint and leave the window pure and transparent before the man can look out, and, as you pass by, be seen by you. The soul in the body is like a man in a room, and the condition of the body corresponds to that of the window. As you go among people whose bodies are diseased and uncared for, their external causes

them to appear as though they had no souls. The truth is, the soul is shut in; it cannot see out and you cannot see it from outside. As you need to cleanse the window in order to see the man in the room, and let him look out upon you, so, and for the same reasons, you need to cleanse the body that the soul may look out upon its neighbor souls and display the divine life that is within. The divine life is within you all. It only lacks expression. Human nature is quite good enough. We do not want it any better than it is. There is good enough in humanity to redeem the world, but we must allow it to express itself in the fairest and most beautiful way, that all may see its spiritual brightness. The question of morality is a delicate one, and by some is thought difficult to deal with, because morality must be considered from two different standpoints—the standpoint of the individual and that of society at large. There must often be one standard of morality for the nation and another for the individual. Every one may have an individual standard of morality, and the national standard will become higher and higher as the national spirit expands and its intelligence improves; whereas the standard of morality for the nation must be decided by a consensus of competent minds, and for the time being must necessarily be the crystallization of the highest thoughts of the highest minds among those who have risen to the highest places in Government.

The man who governs you truly is the man who cannot help governing; it is his nature to rule; you follow his lead because you respect his capacity. In a perfect state of society a President will be a President from sheer force of necessity, and indeed every man will fall into his own place, will find his own level, and fill his own niche; just as men become more and more natural, not supernatural, they will all fall into their own places, and do their own work till there will be no contention, no disturbances at election time, and no difficulty in electing the right men, because as every man is employed, and as all get into their right places, they will naturally fall into line. . . . In order to make truth our own; in order to become thoroughly in harmony with the spirit of truth, and make our lives as divine as they can be, we have but to fall in love with truth to have it revealed unto us in all its untarnished beauty and perfection. As we contemplate the beauty of truth over and over again the desire grows up within us to make it practical, and to adorn our own lives with it, and make our own condition as beautiful as the state of those angels who reveal these truths unto us. We cannot have too high an ideal. The very humblest artist may not in a moment reach the eminence of a Raphael, but may he not improve as he gazes upon

the great works of the greatest of masters? Would you not advise your artists to study only the greatest masters, and your musicians, as far as they can, to study the most faultless musical compositions? Are you not aware that looking at poor pictures, and listening to poor music, is the very worst experience for one whose talent is being developed? Are you not aware that in order to become proficient in literary directions you should read only the best books, and listen to the conversations of the most polished and correct people? You should live in an atmosphere of culture, and become so enamored with the beauty and utility of art, that, forever rising nearer and nearer to perfection, you may have the greatest possible incentive to perseverance by looking upon and hearing only that which causes you to become enamored with what is most perfect in nature.

Our work, as reformers, should be for the elevation of the world by the exercise of all our powers to the extent of our abilities. We are called upon to work for the House of God. If any of us really desire to form for ourselves a House of God and Gate of Heaven, a temple in which we may study out all the higher aspects of spiritual truth, we must have that temple entirely under the control of the spirit, consecrated entirely to those influences which respond unto our own highest desires. It may not be possible or practicable to form an external temple on a large scale in any public place, but within our own houses we may sit in some quiet room, and, gathering together a select company of friends, simply allow ourselves to receive the answer to our aspirations. We need not talk, question, or argue. It will only be necessary for us to sit together in a receptive attitude, and the confluent streams of magnetic life will flow in one grand tide of aspiration, and thus we may have a Jacob's ladder, upon which angels will descend with their inspirations to bless us, and up which our desires will ascend and meet those angels who are at the summit. If people ask you to take shares in any public building and propose to let it out for concerts and general entertainments, by consenting to do so you will only assist to add one more structure to the brick and mortar edifices which everywhere spring up like mushrooms. A Spiritual Temple is not merely a building which must be made to pay. When we erect a Spiritual Temple, we must have the money kept in the background altogether, and instead of a paying speculation, we must have an edifice erected by the voluntary offerings of the people who want it.

There can be no real spiritual success in a temple dedicated to the enlightenment of the world, until it grows up by your own mutual endeavors. We therefore recommend that men should make no external plans for the erection of the church of the future. We advise no subscription lists, nor the publication of any form of service; but, as in the days of primitive Christianity, it will be well for us to have meetings at our homes or elsewhere, consecrating ourselves to work, and letting all participate who desire, thus benefiting each other as we are drawn together in harmony; for as spiritual influences mingle, a true House of God, a centre of usefulness, a Gate of Heaven is established.

THE GODS OF THE PAST AND THE GOD OF THE FUTURE.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

From the earliest historic ages men have been wont to worship God in some form or other. They have not always dedicated temples to his honor, but they have universally selected certain places, which they considered to be dear unto the Great Spirit; and in certain forms of nature have seemed to specially behold the workings of a Divine Power controlling all things, themselves included. It is even, to-day, very hard for some men to realize that if God exists, that God is good. Many persons are Theists in the sense that they believe in the existence of a Supreme Power, but Infidels in the sense that they cannot believe that that Divine Power is perfectly good: The complications of earthly life seem to them so terrible and so unjust, the innocent seeming oftentimes to suffer in spite of all their endeavors to succeed, while the ungodly enrich themselves every day with the spoils which they have taken from innocent toilers, and go down to their graves full of years and full of honors. In good health and in prosperity, they seem to have passed all their days, while the innocent are left to suffer in adversity. The rich profligate fares sumptuously, wears garments of purple and fine linen, eats the most luxuriant viands and drinks costly beverages every day, while many an honest man starves to death. If there were no life beyond, this life would be an ignominious failure.

If we had no evidences that there is a spiritual world into which man must enter, there to receive his just deserts, this earthly life would be a mockery. The divine sense of justice within the human soul is a portion of the nature of things. If it were not, it could not be in man, who is a portion of the nature of things. If it were not for this divine sense of justice,

this earthly life might possibly be the boundary line of all human experiences, and we might rest content with such a belief unless some remarkable demonstration of spiritual power were vouchsafed unto every human being, convincing him of a hereafter.

While spiritual manifestations undoubtedly occur to-day, while they have occurred in all past days, and while in all probability they will continue to occur in the future, until man no longer needs them, these spiritual manifestations are not acceptable to every mind. The evidences which are sufficient to convince one class of thinkers are entirely inadequate to supply the demands of another class. But apart from phenomena, deeper down in the recesses of human nature than any external demonstration can ever go, there exists a divine soul ever proclaiming its own existence, and ever arguing in favor of its own immortality. The soul that is within man protests against annihilation or oblivion at the end of man's earthly career, not only because the earthly life is far too brief and meager to afford opportunities for the exercise of every gift with which man is endowed, but also because a future life is needed in order to set things straight, by causing the wicked to enter into the consequences of their crimes, and the righteous and the innocent into the results of their moral excellence. While the doctrine of everlasting punishment is atrocious; while the infidelity of to-day is preferable to the Calvinism of a hundred years ago; while it is a great deal better to believe in no God than to believe in a God more tyrannical than the most cruel earthly emperor—at the same time passing out of the darkened room of modern Atheism into

the bright and glorious palace of the Spiritualism of the future, we shall find the idea of a God supplying all our needs through the workings of nature's laws, infinitely preferable to blank Materialism—a God never setting aside his own law in order to accomplish divine results; never sending a son into the world in a supernatural or unnatural way; never endowing man with supernatural gifts in order that he may convince the world that a Deity exists, but inspiring teachers, age after age, more and more perfectly, until the laws of nature shall be so understood that spiritual and physical laws shall be beheld by all as working in all their operations together.

Man's soul, man's reason, man's body, man himself in all his varied parts, must be the living temple of the one living God whose throne is the soul of man, and whose judgment-seat the human conscience. History proves that in all ages of the world man has endeavored to attain this end. All the gods of the past are partial representatives of the divine idea, and in order to take in correctly the situation, and estimate justly the religion of our ancestors, we are compelled to admit that the human spirit, when it first enters into material life, commences its work under the crudest possible conditions; that the first organisms which spirits took upon themselves when they incarnated themselves in matter were of the very lowest type, and that in those very lowest forms they could only behold the very smallest manifestations of the divine life. Those who have passed away from these lower bodies have, through some processes perchance fully known only to God, certainly not thoroughly understood by all of you, elevated themselves, until to-day in the spiritual world, and oftentimes among yourselves, they grasp higher ideas, and are your inspirers. Not only are those men inspired who believe intellectually in the theory of inspiration; not only are those persons acted upon by unseen agencies who call themselves mediums, or who are called so by others, but every human spirit dwelling in a mortal frame is accompanied by those intelligences (dwellers in the unseen world), who are attracted to mortals through the natural law of attraction; the spirit dwelling in the mortal form just as much as the spirit in the spiritual world, repelling those who are attracted to other centres, these being kept from you by the workings of the natural law of repulsion. The laws of attraction and repulsion are necessary to keep people and things in their right places, and when they are truly understood and recognized by men as among the essential laws of life, all men will love all of their fellow beings, though they may not wish to associate with all of them. They will admire the beauty in every soul; they will recognize the genius in every

individual, and readily bear testimony to the good which inheres in everything, but will only appropriate to themselves that which will benefit them and that through which they can benefit the universe, leaving unto those who require other discipline, and who have other works to do, association with other souls and other materials.

The very earliest gods of the world seem to have been identified with those spiritual conceptions of life which manifest unto us the existence of spirit even in the forms of the very lowest earthly creatures—not only in flowers and birds, but also in reptiles, the early fetich worshipers often finding their deities in the most powerful animals and venomous snakes.

The ancients seem to have beheld some divinity in everything; and after all, may we not go back to the old days, and, taking up the fetich idea, behold in it much that is in advance of some prevalent ideas in Christendom? The early man found a god of some kind or other in the lowest creatures with which he was surrounded, but very often Christians can only find the devil in that out of which they have not extracted any personal good. The idea that man was freely inspired in the days of his primeval innocence is in a sense correct; undoubtedly his was the idea that God inhabited all things, and therefore in every form of existence he beheld something of divinity. The early inhabitants of this earth were not wise. We freely and gladly admit that the world is more advanced to-day than it has ever been in any fabled golden age said to be past. But we confidently assert that there was a time when men were unsophisticated like children, not knowing the difference between good and evil. This seems to us perfectly natural; and in that early life they were like children, guided hither and thither by spiritual power more completely than the intellectualists of to-day are willing to be swayed until they can satisfy themselves through the intellect that they are being guided rightly. A man who cultivates his emotions only may have a beautiful conception of life from a purely sentimental standpoint; his poetry may be very consoling to the afflicted, and may beautifully portray the glories of the life beyond death. The most illiterate man may be a model father and a model citizen, morally speaking, setting a good example to every person with whom he comes in contact, and yet you would not hold up a condition of illiteracy as the most perfect condition of human life. You would not point to that ignorant man and say: "Behold his purity. Behold the nobility of his sentiment. Do you not find in him the acme of human attainment?" You cannot argue that a wholly emotional life is a perfect life. It is a one-sided life. The intellectual life, when the intellect alone is called into exercise, is also a

one-sided life. For you know full well that a man is not a saint because he is a geologist or an astronomer, however eminent he may be in his specialty; neither is he a sinner because he is entirely devoid of scholastic advantages.

When man fell he fell out of the primitive condition of innocence—a very rudimentary class—into the school of the intellect. When man fell, Reason asserted itself in the power of choice, the power of discrimination; and not until this power of reason asserted itself did man know the difference between good and evil; the serpent which tempted him was the lower nature striving to capture the reason, while the higher nature, speaking in the conscience, said unto man in the days of old: "In the day when thou eatest of the fruit of the forbidden tree; in the day when thou art sensual, and dost degrade the powers whose use thou now understandest, thou shalt surely die to happiness, to innocence, to perfect mental and physical health." While physical dissolution in itself is a blessing, yea, a necessity, while vegetables, animals, and every form of organic and inorganic existence died before man appeared on the planet, in order that they might pave the way for man, thereby proving that death did not originate with man's transgression, our sufferings, our diseases, our fears, our wretchednesses, the sting of death, the horror of the grave, the remorse which violated conscience produces in us—these are the penalties of transgression and the consequences of the fall of man. We are not going to argue concerning what might have been if man had never sinned; but we admit as a possible and as a plausible theory, that if the human spirit had not allowed the lower nature to get possession of the reason, that man might have developed up out of a condition of ignorant, pristine innocence, into one of sagacity, combining the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove, painlessly and sinlessly, and thereby have attained to angelhood through resisting temptation, but never yielding, thus making it unnecessary that probationary or purgatorial worlds should come into existence in order that the soul might regain the paradise which it had lost.

In the earliest times men were almost entirely engrossed in material pursuits. The soil was not easily cultivated; labor-saving appliances were entirely unknown, and therefore the whole energy of man was bent upon securing material possessions; man could not then behold God manifested to the intellect. He beheld God manifested through the natural emotions, and also through the vegetable and animal forms, which were all around him. Do you wonder that man admired the subtlety of the serpent? Do you wonder that he imagined that some deific essence was embodied in a creature that possessed a sagacity greater than his

own? Do you wonder that those animals which roamed the forest endeavoring to capture him, and all he possessed, should excite his fears? Do you wonder that when the lightnings flashed and the thunders roared, and volcanoes sent up their lava and smoke, while earthquakes rent the ground in twain, that man should acknowledge the existence of a Divine Power operating through the forces of nature? But as in those early days man had but very slightly developed reasoning faculties, and as he could not, from the experiences of ages, understand how all these disturbances and trials were necessary to unfold the potencies of earth, as well as the potencies of the human soul, as he had no history out of which he might be instructed, he only thought that God was wroth with him, that God's ire was displayed, and when his own conscience smote him, informing him that he had not been true unto himself, he dreaded that he had incurred the displeasure of the infinite, and imagined a world of torment, into which all who displeased the gods must be thrust. But this dark side of life's picture could not be the only side gazed upon, while flowers, birds, copious harvests, genial rains, bright blue skies and cheering sunbeams everywhere displayed beauty alternating with gloom: Kindliness was manifested as well as cruelty. And as early man could not understand, as many of us can hardly understand to-day, that all evil is undeveloped good, and that all afflictions are the shadows which coming blessings cast directly before they reach us, and as early man could not comprehend the use of all the disturbances and miseries with which he was surrounded, he said, very naturally, "I know there is a God, but there is not only one God, there are a great many gods, and some of these gods are powerful for good, and others are powerful for evil."

And as the early man looked up at the sky above him and beheld the sun seemingly eclipsed in the winter months, and then bursting forth again in the early spring, rejuvenating the earth, he divided the year into seasons which he considered were presided over by good and evil genii. And when looking upon the starry groups, he seemed to see that they assumed animal and other forms, he considered that those constellations which appeared to rule the earth in the summer time were the abodes of beneficent Deities, as those which heralded the approach of winter were of unkind spirits. Is it at all wonderful that man is always selfish until he is developed into perfect angelhood, and should offer sacrifices to unkind spirits in order that he might propitiate them? Is it at all wonderful that the beautiful gods and goddesses of earth received but a very small portion of his devotion, and that he spent the most of the time which he devoted to religious worship in endeavoring to ward off

the blows which he was afraid would be struck by unmerciful and unholy gods?

Thus most of the early religions have been religions of fear, and most of the gods which have been adored by the ancients have been gods which have excited the terror rather than the love of those who were their worshippers on earth; men never failing in their endeavor to propitiate those angry deities through obedience to those priests who unscrupulously worked upon the fears of the credulous. Religions which were beautiful in their primitive simplicity in the far-away ages, became degraded, and the minds of men enslaved by them in the mazes of superstition, their multifarious deities regarded rather as the enemies than as the friends of men, through the direct agency of a power loving priesthood. If we inquire into the very earliest, which is the very highest thought of Egypt, of India, of Persia, of Hindostan, or of any other clime, we can find nothing more beautiful than the original idea of God, revealed unto the early teachers of the world, who, before they corrupted themselves, were among the most gifted minds which have bequeathed unto succeeding generations a rich legacy of knowledge concerning spiritual things.

In ancient Egypt Osiris was a glorious being of perfect justice; a god who dwelt in the sun; and this divine circle, this eternal sphere, was divided unto man's comprehension through the figure of the triangle into Osiris the divine father, Isis the veiled mother, and Horus the divine child. The early Egyptian Trinity was a natural trinity—father, mother and child; the order of nature displayed in the stars above and the flowers beneath, and most of all in human nature. Solar worship was the divinest conception of the ancient mind; and what was known as sex-worship was nothing more than the deification of the divine processes of generation, the acknowledgment of the workings of the supreme God through the mediumship of the laws of nature, and all the organs of human and animal life.

The early conceptions of the most inspired men were so chaste and so pure, so divinely beautiful, that could you receive the interpretation as it would be given to you by the pure men and women who first grasped the spiritual idea, instead of being shocked you would be delighted, and instead of being attracted earthward you would be raised heavenward. Can there be a diviner conception of life than this—that every power that is in man is pure and noble, when unperverted, and is of the divine? Can there be a sweeter thought than this—that God manifests himself in the flesh whenever a child is born, and that every time a mother clasps a new-born babe to her breast she becomes in a certain sense the mother of God? Can there be a diviner conception of life than this—that

by obeying every law of health we may find nature, uncorrupted and undefiled—that all our bodies may be temples of God, and all our powers may be put to the service of humanity, which is the true worship of God? Here is the essence of religion; here is the soul of all the religions, both of the Orient and of the Occident.

The uncleanness and tyranny with which they have oftentimes been disgraced is no part of their original essence, which is purity. For as we have reminded you before, while in early times men, thousands and millions in number, were in degradation and in ignorance, the world was never without its prophets nor without its seers. In days of old, by the inspired seers and seeresses, prophets and prophetesses—for men and women were acknowledged as equals in the days of early religion; the exaltation of the masculine element to the exclusion of the feminine was in itself a corruption, and the outgrowth of the vilest sensuality—men and women were regarded as the manifestations of God, and in the Roman Catholic Church to-day the joint honors which are paid to the Virgin Mary and to Jesus are only perpetuations of the honors which were paid to Brahma and to Maya, to Jupiter and to Minerva, to Osiris and to Isis. Wherever there was a god acknowledged it was both as male and female, and is thus represented before the Christian's gaze under the similitude of mother and son. Sun and earth in Egypt, light and darkness in India, the masculine and feminine elements of life always were displayed together, and of course most perfectly in the deification of the human form, humanity being the highest earthly manifestation of the divine order in a spiritualized portrayal. The masculine represented the intellectual and the feminine the emotional or intuitional capacities of human nature.

Probably the earliest religion was the religion of Central America, and what that was is only revealed unto students to-day through the religion of India, which is probably an offshoot from it. In very early times there was a civilization upon this continent surpassing the civilization of to-day in the wonderful attainments of the few, but very far inferior to this civilization in the attainments of the multitude. Where a thousand people are now educated, probably but one was educated then. Where a thousand to-day are capable of comprehending spiritual truth, probably but one could comprehend it in those days. All temples, pyramids, in short all enduring and curious monuments which yet remain showing that cities which have long been buried were formerly centres of learning, were erected by the supreme commands of those royal families of priests, who also made the civil laws.

The inhabitants of Central America, as they migrated northward, left behind them on their way many sublime conceptions of Deity which are found at this hour to constitute the religion of the red man of the prairies. If there are those here to-day who pride themselves upon the Christianity of America, let us assure them that the Orthodox Christian God is far inferior to the God of the red man; if, as a sample of the Christian God, you take the God of the Universalist and of the Unitarian, who comes nearest to the God of Jesus of any in Christendom, then the Christian God surpasses every other God. If this idea of God is synonymous with a true evangelical idea, as it is if evangelical means borrowed from the writings of the evangelists, God is Father of all and God is Love, and this is of course the highest of all conceptions of Deity; but this conception is the one, until very recently, most determinately resisted by most professing Christians. When we antagonize modern Christianity we do so in order that we may bring out in all its glory the beauty of the religion of Jesus when exposed in its primitive simplicity, for the religion of Jesus, if it was what it is represented to be in the four gospels, was the flowering out of all other systems in a concentrated form, an embodiment of all the best theories which had preceded it.

The conception of the red Indian to-day is most certainly far in advance of the conception of the Orthodox Christian, because the red Indian pays his devotion to the Great Spirit of universal Nature, and believes that that Great Universal Spirit abandons no one; he teaches that some time or other all will be happy. If man retains conscious individuality forever he will certainly retain it in connection with the favor of the Divine Parent.

The Sioux Indians believe in immortality and in a very rational heaven; they even bury food in the grave with the bodies of their departed heroes and friends, that they may be sustained on their journey to the happy hunting-grounds by the spirit which inheres in material things. The conception of the red man generally, and particularly the idea of the Sioux Indians, seem to us to be an idea concerning the future life something like this: that when man passes out of the material body he has to take a long journey before he reaches the celestial hunting-grounds, and that while taking that journey he needs food to eat; and that as his body is no longer of the gross texture which your bodies are of, he cannot eat the outer substance of foods, but can extract the spiritual essence. Now this journey from earth to the happy hunting-grounds is only the journey through varied spheres of being through which every human spirit must pass when it leaves the mortal form, ere it reaches an angelic state of being. We

cannot leap into the happiness of heaven until we are prepared to enjoy a perfectly holy life, or heaven itself would be for us a world of uncongeniality.

The Indians are undoubtedly descended from those civilized men who formerly inhabited the interior of America. These must have migrated northward, and crossed the land which is now under water (that water now known as Behning's Strait) into Asia, and making their way at length into India, there established the earliest system of religious worship of which any reliable written record has been handed down to posterity. This Hindu religion was as beautiful and pure as anything could be in its earliest aspects. Brahm, the Universal Spirit, was said to find his abode in all things. His worshipers never offered unto him either human or animal sacrifices, or even the fruits of the ground. They believed that they could only enter into communion with him by living lives of spotless purity, and that no unclean thought could be other than hateful to him; and through sufferings untold they sought to prepare themselves to enter into the blessedness of Nirvana, the Oriental heaven.

Nirvana is not a state in which individuality is lost, but is, according to the best thought of the most highly cultured Oriental scholars of to-day, a state in which all souls are united in wisdom and in love. Here they have lost earthly passion, fear, and everything which degrades man; spiritually becoming one with God, every soul is able to say, "I and my Father are one," as Jesus is reported to have said ere he closed his ministry upon earth. In order that they may become one with Brahm, they find it necessary to live lives of stainless purity, and obey every law of health, and to subdue the body in order that the soul within may be victorious over sense. In the Brahmanical religion the Trinity, as well as unity, is displayed. Brahma, the "Creator and Presiding Spirit of the Universe," is represented as an august person ruling heaven; unapproachable except through a mediator, and only communicating with the earth through Vishnu, the Second Person of the Brahmanical Trinity. This Vishnu is displayed before the gaze of mortals as a beautiful young man of most agreeable disposition, incarnating himself on the earth when necessary, to assist humanity forward, while Siva has been corrupted into an avenging Deity. His destructive power being brought prominently forward, and his reproductive energy kept in the back-ground, Siva is correctly the God of Destruction and Reproduction.

In the early days of Brahmanism, the priests only paid their adoration to the infinite by their spotless lives, and endeavors for the elevation of their kind; but after a while they formed themselves into brotherhoods, established caste,

and sought their own aggrandizement before all things else. They lost their spirituality through self-love, and the desire to appear better than others got possession of them. Then they began to practice those degrading rites which led them to consider that an emasculated and injured body was the proper offering for them to make unto the Supreme Being. Then did they magnify the destructive power of Siva, and urge the people to build altars to Siva, as destroyer, to the neglect of Brahma and Vishnu, because by asking the people to offer sacrifices to the avenging deity they knew that a large revenue would become theirs. And here priestcraft entered into and corrupted the early tide of spirituality.

The early priests were natural mediums, persons endowed with spiritual gifts, and who knew that the way to develop spirituality was in obeying every law of health, in the contemplation of divine things, and in working for the elevation of the whole universe to the furthest limit of their ability. In Christianity we find that the very same mistakes which ruined ancient systems have been made, the very same errors perpetrated. In early days Christians were inspired, as Jesus said they should be; they possessed the magnetic power to heal by laying on of hands, and made their way solely by the intrinsic power of the spirit: But as soon as they sought their own pleasure and profit only, formed iron creeds and established ecumenical councils, establishing inflexible rules for the church, allowing no room for growth, and persecuting every man who dared to differ from them, they learned to shed blood in the name of that Great Teacher who came to the earth to save men's lives, and not to destroy them.

The gods of the Orient, the gods of Buddhism, as well as the gods of Brahmanism are beautiful to look upon, and beautiful to think of, as we consider them in their original simplicity:

The manifested deity of the religion of Buddha was the incarnation of Vishnu in the human form; and while there is something exclusive and restricted in the idea of avatars appearing on the earth periodically, and while we do not favor the idea that God confines himself to Buddha, to Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, to Isis and Osiris, or Jesus Christ, we believe in the idea of the perfect man, being the medium through whom God teaches the world; and that, after all, the Saviour of the world is not one being, or one personage, but may be found in every human creature who engages in philanthropic efforts, and is willing to lend his energies to the elevation of humanity. Those who will save the world by denying themselves to help others are one with the Christ-Spirit, no matter what their religious opinions may be, and no matter what their sci-

entific or other attainments. When we pass into Persia, we find that the same idea of ineffable deity is recognized beyond the powers of darkness and the powers of light, whom Persian theology clearly defines and divides into six good gods and six evil deities, the six divinities being the offspring of Ormuzd, the six evil genii the progeny of Ahriman; inferior to these they also acknowledge a vast host of good and evil spirits. But the Persian at last destroys the evil influences in his system, for he contends that after the Day of Judgment perfect good shall be all in all. We are confronted with the mysteries of evil every day. Did not the early men know how to solve the problem better than many of our modern thinkers? They say, here is Brahm, the Creator and Preserver, the Destroyer and Reproducer—the All-in-All. They believed that after ages and ages have elapsed, all deities and all souls shall be returned into the bosom of the Infinite Parent of all Good.

Is there not a solution of the problem of evil in the Persian theology when it states that all subordinate deities who have ever presided over earth shall at some future day be absorbed into the Great Infinite Spirit, who is all? Do we not catch the idea that all evil in the world to-day is only good in disguise? and that all the afflictions and trials and tendencies of our human nature, which lead us astray, all have their legitimate uses, and all are adjusted at some time or other, having worked together for good? Did not these early men behold, in their inspirational flights, good in all? In Greece and Rome the pantheistic philosophers found good in everything; as long as they kept on the high level of spiritualistic pantheism, they established a religion of perfect beauty. But as soon as their corrupting practices killed the soul of their faith, then their corruption became the cause of the swallowing up of Grecian civilization in the Roman, and then the fall of Rome, which had entombed Greece; these great peoples fell a prey to all forms of immorality before their national greatness faded. What are these gods of Greece and Rome? Those beautiful gods, Minerva, Flora, Apollo and Jupiter, who displayed themselves upon Olympus and Parnassus' sacred heights? What are those gods, who, like Orpheus, strike nature's lyre and produce sweet music throughout the universe? What are those gods who presided over households and individuals, and who were called the *Lares* and *Penates*? Who are those ancestral spirits who attach themselves to men and women according to the faith of the Chinese? These gods are all spirits who have ascended from the earth and who can be invoked, not by any special processes of invocation, but rather by the quality of thought which is continually shaping the mind of man and attract-

ing either an angel or an inferior spirit to his side.

Who are those gods of the Jews? Some mighty and some weak; some wise and some foolish; some beneficent and others tyrannical? Are they to be looked upon in the concrete form as the almighty Jehovah (Yahveh), the ruler of heaven and earth? Can we dare to believe that God or his chosen representative in the spiritual world, or the guardian angel of any individual, will command the wholesale massacre of women and children, who have been taken captive in war? We certainly cannot, but we can believe that the Supreme Spirit allows us to be deceived and led into error when we encourage our lower propensities, and misuse our energies? Can we believe that the Eternal Spirit is capable of the foibles, and eccentricities, and petty jealousies of human nature? that he does a thing and then is sorry for it? Can we believe in a God who is so changeable that he can be importuned by his servant Moses to change his mind? Can we believe in a God who says, "I am a jealous God, and I will not allow you to pay any attention to the deities of other nations?" We can believe that such human spirits have had an existence. We can believe that the variety of intelligences who clustered around the prophets of old got possession of them for good when they wished to do good, and that unclean spirits got possession of them and gave them wicked commands when they misdirected their energies and prostituted their spiritual powers; when they wished to do evil, then they received communication from debasing spirits and mistook them for Jehovah. We can believe that the Jewish people were presided over by one Supreme Being whom they called Jehovah, or, correctly, Yahveh, signifying "a Being who always was." We can believe that this, which was the highest conception of God possible to the Jewish mind, varied with the varying conditions of their lives. We can believe that while the Supreme Spirit allows us to be deceived and led into error when we encourage our lower propensities and misuse our divinely given powers, he only does so in order that we may be led back into the right way.

We can believe in a God who allows us to form a hell into which we must enter and suffer for our misdeeds, and then by our own energies transform our hells into heavens. We can believe in a God who allows temporary mistakes to be made in order that his children may educate themselves for future felicity, and in a God who will see all things righted in the end, and all forms of iniquity ultimately crushed out; in a God who can overrule and who will overrule all things for the good of every soul. Reason and intuition alike protest against the *limited* conception of the Orientals, Grecians, Romans

and Jews, being the ultimate idea. The gods of the past were gods of virtue and of vice, gods loving and gods unkind. The God of the future will embody the sum total of excellencies displayed diffusely in all the gods of the past; he revealing himself to man's own sense of right, will allow you to worship him in any temple, mosque, synagogue or secret chamber, which you please. He will require no lavish offerings in the form of churches, but will teach you to draw nigh unto him as you make every house a House of God and a Gate of Heaven, and to organize yourselves for religious work only as you by so doing are able to benefit one another. God bless all the churches which are working for the elevation of society! God is inspiring every minister who is doing his duty to the best of his ability, and is speaking to every mind and every soul through the spirit which prompts men to live pure and holy lives. God can work outside of the churches as well as inside of them.

God may be worshiped in temples made with or without hands, if these temples are so constructed and dedicated that they become saviours of society, teaching men to understand and obey the laws of nature. Remember that the worship of God and the whole duty of man is summed up in the simple statement that to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to work as assiduously for their welfare as we work for our own, is to render the reasonable service which God expects from us.

The God of the future will not be an abstraction, a blind force, nor a nameless power, sometimes working good and sometimes evil; but will be an intelligent principle of good displayed in all things, and most perfectly revealed in human nature. And whether we gaze up at the skies or look down upon the flowers under our feet, or whether we look upon the illuminated counterances of our friends, we shall behold the Tabernacle of God. The God of the future will be our Father and Mother beyond all comprehension and all thought in the sublimity of perfect goodness, and yet revealed unto us through the instrumentality of the dear ones yet upon earth and those who have crossed the river beyond.

Without entering into any metaphysical argument, and without troubling ourselves with theoretical conceptions of a personal God, we may leave it to you all to find your God in whatever elevates you, and prompts you to do your duty most faithfully. And as you turn your eyes upward in grief and distress, you may not all take in the idea of the infinite, all-pervading spirit in a direct sense answering your prayers, but that Divine Power will assuredly still your cries of grief and ease your pain, by assuring you that loving ones are ever around you, and that the dear ones whom you

have lost are now your helpers, and that his spiritual perfection will be displayed in man's eternal glory. That a sublime and elevating conception of the eternal may be yours; that the thought of a God of perfect love may make you tender and wise in all your dealings with the down-trodden and distressed; that in all

your hours of loneliness, perplexity and sorrow, you may find an unfailing refuge in the sweet assurance that you can never be destitute of the protecting and enlightening love of angel friends, is our heartfelt wish to-day, not only for all within the sound of our voice, but for all humanity.

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Eternal and Infinite Spirit, author of life, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of alteration, in every age thy hallowed light has gilded the span of human experience. While human creeds and human theories, born of the hour and of the attainments of the moment, may rise and fall like meteors, yet faith and hope and love, yea, every virtue, all moral excellencies, all gifts of the spirit, all rich mental endowments abide forever and forever.

In one age of the world thy spirit speaketh with greater clearness than in another, for as men are always advancing nearer and nearer to the perfect man do they behold thee more and more clearly. The revelation which came to the ancient Jew is insufficient for us to-day. The knowledge communicated to the seers and *savants* of India, of Persia, and of Egypt is inadequate to supply our needs at this moment. And thus we gratefully acknowledge the supplementary inspiration of to-day and the continuance of the flow of spiritual water from the ever-living fount; so that wherever we may be, at whatever time and in whatsoever condition, we have only to stoop and drink of the water of the river of everlasting life that is ever fructifying our lives, which would otherwise be barren and dead.

We praise thee that no human prejudice nor bigotry can close up the flood-gates of inspiration. We praise thee that all the attacks of the enemies of truth only result in their own discomfiture, while the truth goes on conquering and to conquer.

We praise thee that all persecutions which have ever been endured by apostles of freedom have only caused truth more widely to spread, while their blood has flowed and enriched the soil wherein it germinated; so that the blood of the martyrs has been aptly called "the seed of the church." And if to-day any apostles of freedom, any mediums for spiritual communication, are called in question; if the methods of the spiritual world are assailed; if men in their pride presumption and bigotry will not listen to the angels' call, we know that there will be everywhere some hearts found ready to receive the good seed of

the heavenly kingdom, and that it will bring forth fruit in their lives even an hundred fold.

We know that there are millions of hearts to-day who are anxiously watching the signs of the times, and longing to hear beloved voices resounding from the unseen shore; we know that there are lives daily and hourly brightened by angelic ministry; and we believe not, for we cannot believe, that thou, the Eternal Fount of Goodness, our father and our mother God—thou who lovest all thy children, and treatest them all equitably, will allow them to be deceived and led astray by evil spirits when they are searching for truth: but rather that their loving friends offer to assist them in the path of goodness.

We will not believe that thou, Eternal Spirit of Good, dost allow thy rival and thine enemy to capture the souls whom thou lovest, and lead them to destruction unawares. When thine angels come unto us, and men call them devils, may we remember that the great Seer of Galilee, thy noble and pure Son, Jesus Christ, was said by the Orthodox of his day to be possessed of the devil: casting out devils, by Beelzebub, their Prince. When their opposition is manifested to freedom, to truth and inspiration, may we remember that all that is good and useful has been attributed by the ignorant and the bigoted to the devil. While the ignorant and the bigoted and the unkind and the unjust find the devil everywhere in the universe, may we, as dutiful children and as lovers of thy law, as those who frame their lives in obedience to it, find the devil nowhere, but thyself everywhere. And thus by our own purity and by our own justice and loving kindness, may we find in nature that which responds unto the goodness in ourselves—that even through a feeble glimmer, a trembling spark, the divinity in ourselves may yet shine out in glory. May we by all virtuous undertaking, by all noble thinking, acting and speaking, fan that spark into a flame so bright and glorious, and helpful to our brethren, that we may show forth in our lives a light which is the harbinger of the perfect day. May our lives become daily more and more helpful to others as we enjoy the blessedness of angelic communion. May we become more

and more ready to lend the ear to all the voices of the spirit, while by our own striving after goodness in the spirit we are protected from all malevolent influences. May we help to transform devils into angels, by following in the best way—the lovely road of charity.

And thus unto thee, Infinite Spirit and God of Love, may we offer acceptable praise by living lives of good, and obeying thy perfect will. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

In the columns of the *Banner of Light* for Nov. 5th, 1881, we find an article from the pen of the Rev. Austin Phelps, D. D., of Andover, entitled, "How Shall the Pulpit Treat Spiritualism?" It is our purpose this afternoon to reply to that article very briefly, and to sift the evidences as far as we are able—if there are any evidences which can be brought forward against the legitimacy of Modern Spiritualism by churchianic opponents. You may be aware that what we refer to was copied into the columns of the *Banner of Light* from the *Congregationalist* of the 19th of October last. Prof. Phelps is considered a man of authority in certain ecclesiastical quarters. He is supposed to stand high up in the Orthodox world, and whenever he speaks there are many who are ready to listen; and we are afraid there are a great many unthinking people who will follow a leader like a flock of sheep, who are ready to abide by his suggestions without realizing that from first to last he brings forth no argument in support of a doctrine which is at once irrational and detestable; and that Prof. Phelps advocates a course of duplicity by telling the clergy to preach the Devil, though they are not at all sure of the existence of a devil; and that while they may have their own doubts as to the existence of His Satanic Majesty, they are to treat their congregations as though they had *no such doubts*.

Prof. Phelps admits that whatsoever there is in Spiritualism which is not the result of jugglery or deception, may be explained by scientists in future days; but considers that all attempts at explanation are for the present to be set aside, and, to use his own word, the devil must be "resuscitated." Thereby Prof. Phelps admits that the devil is already dead and buried; the devil has died out of modern theology, and faith in the devil has almost entirely left the minds of all intelligent people. Dr. Phelps, by using the word "resuscitated," shows that he acknowledges this; that faith in the devil is not only on the decline, but is almost gone. He undoubtedly finds that the Orthodox Churches cannot live without the devil. He discovers that in order that they may be supported, the devil must be awakened from the dead. Consequently men who are educated, men who have passed through college and have been loaded with honors, men who have taken the title of "Doctor of Divinity," men who have been call-

ed presumably by the Holy Spirit of God to enlighten the world, are to preach up the devil to the people, even when they themselves have had no positive convictions that the devil exists. The greatest danger to morality is that of making assertions with the lip which our own hearts do not endorse. We emphatically discountenance the practice of singing or reading anything during our meetings which we cannot individually assent to with the heart. A minister or a lecturer is perfectly at liberty conscientiously to read, to sing or to advocate anything which he himself believes, without pausing to inquire whether his congregation or audience endorses the sentiment or not. But, for any man or woman to stand in a public place and proclaim with the lip that which he or she does not conscientiously believe with the heart, is most decidedly to act the deceiver's part; and if the truth is so weak that it requires to be supported with vague utterances which the heart will not assent to, then truth itself is unworthy of fighting for and unworthy of living for.

The first assertion that Prof. Phelps makes concerning Spiritualism is this: "Starting on the most general and assured ground of belief respecting this delusion." How does Prof. Phelps *know* it is a delusion? If he admits, as he does later on, that evil spirits communicate, then Spiritualism is not a delusion—it is a fact! Prof. Phelps has nothing to substantiate the use of the word "delusion," therefore he begins a very weak argument with an unsupported assertion. He continues: "May not much be accomplished by simply exposing the irreligious drift of it, as seen in its own records?" If you please, Prof. Phelps, will you tell us what religion is? You are a believer in the Bible, and you consider that the whole of the New Testament is inspired. Turn to the Epistle of James for the definition of religion, and the inspired Epistle of James says that "pure religion and undefiled," which is certainly the very best kind of religion, is this: "To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and keep one's self unspotted from the world."

Will you please tell us in what spiritual paper you have found the opposite course advocated as a religious course, and when or where Spiritualists or mediums, under inspiration, have urged people not to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and not to keep themselves unspotted from the world? As far as we have knowledge we boldly state that the general drift of all spiritualistic teachings, on the platform and through the agency of the press, is in the direction of cultivating human sympathies and prescribing rules of life which, if followed, make this life happier and holier. If on certain occasions words have been uttered and practices advocated by Spiritualists which are "irreligious," have no uncharitable statements

ever emanated from the pulpit or from the religious press? Are there no black sheep in the theological fold? Are there no professors of religion whose lives will not bear close inspection? But just as every Christian is ready to say we have no right to condemn Christianity as a system, because certain professing Christians are impure, neither have any the right to condemn Spiritualism because certain Spiritualists may be impure.

Christianity claims to be eighteen hundred and fifty years old; Christianity is, therefore, more than eighteen centuries older than Modern Spiritualism. And if Spiritualism found people, as it certainly did, in a condition to attract the lowest and the vilest denizens of the unseen world, the Christianity which has not reformed the world in eighteen hundred years is certainly more to blame than Spiritualism, which has oftentimes had saddled on its back all the errors of a far older and more pretentious system.

There is nothing in the teachings of Spiritualism which is of an irreligious character; while, on the other hand, it is undoubtedly an endorsement of irreligion to tell a man he may live any kind of a life, and, repenting at the very last moment, go to the very heights of glory on the merits of a crucified Saviour. It certainly does put a premium upon vice to advocate a vicarious atonement, teaching that Jesus bore the penalty of human sins upon the cross eighteen hundred and fifty years ago, and that to-day persons can be saved entirely through trusting in him.

It certainly is not advocating the cause of truth or of true religion to tell people, as they have been told thousands of times from the pulpits, that their righteousness "is as filthy rags," and that they must be saved through faith in the Saviour who has made atonement for them, or lacking this faith be lost forever. There are many good people in the Orthodox Church; there are many noble-minded and charitable people, who believe in the most horrible untruths; and yet, at the same time, no matter how good the professing Christians may be, the doctrine of the vicarious atonement is irreligious and wrong, because it tells us that though we have done the wrong, some one else must be punished for it. There is nothing which exercises a more deadly influence in society than telling a man, woman or child that he or she cannot help doing wrong, and that some one else will suffer the consequences of it. It is contrary to the Law of God, contrary to the Law of Nature, which is the Divine Law. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." While the soul can never pass out of existence, never be annihilated, or lose its individual form, it may die as to its happiness and as to its glory. It may sleep in the cold grave of misery in consequence

of misdirecting its energy, but through the resurrection of the conscience it rises into the life sublime—no soul being hopelessly doomed.

Again we quote from Prof. Phelps: "Something is gained if we can show to the satisfaction of thinking men that this thing [Spiritualism] is not religion."

What is religion? According to Jesus, religion is anything that makes life practical and good. If religion means obedience to God through obedience to the Laws of Nature, it means simply a power in the land which develops a love of virtue and of mankind. And we contend that Spiritualism in all its aspects tends to develop a religious feeling among men, and to make them more religious than they would be without its hallowing influence, because whatever else Spiritualism proves, it proves that in the future life retribution surely awaits every person; that no word, thought or action ever goes unpunished or unrewarded, according to its deserts; and as I turn to Matthew's gospel and there find Jesus telling who will be on his right hand on the day of judgment, I do not find that he says anything about the people who called him "Lord" or who believed in his blood; but he says everything of those who have done their duty and acted charitably to their fellow-creatures. Does not Jesus distinctly emphasize the fact that on the day of judgment every "sheep" on the right hand has led a good life, a charitable life, and every "goat" on the left hand has lived an impure and an uncharitable life? Does not Jesus say that you may call him "Lord" as often as you please, but that will not save you; but if you give a cup of cold water to a thirsty disciple you shall in no case lose your reward? This gospel places the Pope of Rome and Col. Ingersoll on one level; the Materialist, the Roman Catholic, the Jew, the Brahman and the Mohammedan are lost sight of in this picture; if they are all equally sincere in their belief and action, they will go hand in hand into the kingdom of heaven, where sects and creeds are unknown.

The religion of Jesus knows nothing of the doctrines of modern Christianity. They are all spurious excrescences. They may proceed from the misinterpretation of the letters of Paul. You may support them as the Calvinists do, by references to the Epistolary writings, but support them out of the Gospels you cannot. Jesus was a mere moralist, and we challenge anybody to prove that he was anything more. He certainly was nothing less. The religion of Jesus is pure, simple morality, and we challenge any one to prove that it is anything more than that; and it is certainly nothing less. The pure morality of the religion of Jesus is this: to do unto one's neighbor as one desires his neighbor to do unto him; this constitutes obedience to the laws of God.

I have the profoundest admiration and the deepest reverence for the character of Jesus as it is portrayed in the gospels. The religion of Jesus, as there portrayed, seems to be the very flowering out of all that is excellent and divine in Brahmanism, Buddhism, Parseeism, and all other older systems. The religion of Jesus is a religion of love, a religion of justice, and a religion of truth. But Orthodox Christianity I detest with all my heart, for Orthodox Christianity is no more like the religion of Jesus than the soiled plaster which covers a beautiful fresco is like the fresco which it hides. I am willing to worship at the shrine of Jesus; I am willing to give him the very highest place among the teachers of men; I am willing to regard him, if you please, as God manifest in the flesh; but in the religion which bears his name I find almost nothing of the doctrine which he promulgated.

Where do we find the Orthodox of the days gone by? The Orthodox Jew? How does Jesus treat the Orthodoxy of his time? "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." How did Jesus stand in the opinion of Orthodox people? They said, "Crucify him, and release unto us Barabbas."

The Orthodoxy of eighteen hundred years ago, which claimed that he was controlled by Beelzebub, was—as the Orthodoxy of to-day is—a fossilized sham. The Orthodoxy of to-day is nothing more nor less than a popularized system of deception: telling the people to attribute everything to the devil, when they do not know that there *is* a devil; telling people to bow down before the shrine of Diana of the Ephesians, just because the silversmiths of the city can get their living by making the silver idols: Whereas if the spiritual deity is adored, if men realize that the forms and ceremonies of religion are not essential, and that creeds, and churches, and salaried ministers, are not as necessary as reformed homes and purified lives, then the trade will undoubtedly begin to decline. And it appears that the stock in trade of the Orthodox churches to-day, according to Prof. Phelps, is His Imperial Highness, the Devil. [Applause.]

Prof. Phelps continues: "Granted that it says many true things and good, it has no more of these than a religious delusion must have to be attractive to believers. Meanwhile the vile things and false, which are its practical outcome, are sufficient to discredit the whole as a system of religion. God does not thus contradict himself."

What is beyond the villany of the Christian Church of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? Can we go any further in villany than to its extreme limit—the commission of murder? Wholesale massacres have taken place in the name of the Christian religion. As long as the

Christian religion was anything like the religion of Jesus, the Christians were persecuted and murdered by Jews and Pagans; but as soon as the Christian religion forsook Jesus and worshiped idols, as soon as the creeds of the churches usurped the simple teachings of the Nazarene, the Christians themselves became the persecutors. You may say that the Roman Catholics were guilty of all the atrocity. It is true that they *did* burn men and women at the stake, but so did the Protestants. Calvin was a persecuting spirit in his time, as relentless as any Papist. In the days of the Protestant Kings of England, Roman Catholics were burned. In the days of the Roman Catholic Kings, Protestants were put to death. Catholicism and Protestantism are just alike in their attitude toward liberal thought. They have gone to the extreme limit of murdering men because they dared to form an opinion and express it. If anything is vile and atrocious, is it not murder? And, if you please, Prof. Phelps, while we can prove to you from history that your Christian ancestors have murdered multitudes in the name of religion, will you tell us who has been put to death during the last thirty-three years at the instigation of the Spiritualists? and what Spiritualists have *attempted* to murder or burn at the stake, or even imprison, their opponents.

Where is the villany in connection with Spiritualism? Where are the pious frauds and murderous actions which are so intimately connected with the history of Christianity? If you are a Christian you live in a house of glass; and if you throw stones at others whom you imagine do not live in a secure habitation, if they throw back any missiles in return you will find that your house cannot stand as well as theirs. We think that if the history of Christianity is as disreputable as it is represented by Christian historians who make the best of it, it would be in good taste for the Christian to hold his tongue concerning other systems until he has entirely gotten rid of all vices from his own; and not until he has entirely wiped out all the blots from his own escutcheon should he busy himself in casting out the moths and beams which are in the eyes of his brethren of other persuasions. I do not tell you that there is nothing good in Christianity, but I affirm that there is just enough good in it to make it respectable—just as Prof. Phelps says there is just enough truth in Spiritualism to make it attractive. I do decidedly state that a system of religion that appeals to man's fear of the devil and his dread of hell is no true religion at all. If I make you an honest man by frightening you into honesty through fear of the devil and of hell, I do not make you a good man at heart, because if you had a fair chance to escape the consequences you would

be a thief, you being honest only through fear of punishment. Religion does not play upon people's fears; it does not hold hell and damnation over their heads; but religion appeals to man's tender sympathies and better nature. It cultivates his love for virtue. Can anything be viler than the theology of Jonathan Edwards, who was very appropriately eulogized in the *Congregationalist* immediately after Prof. Phelps's article had been printed? Jonathan Edwards's religion teaches that the happiness of the saints in heaven will be increased by the contemplation of the eternal sufferings of their condemned relatives in hell.

While I attack Orthodox Christianity, which Prof. Phelps represents, I do not attack Universalism and Unitarianism, and if there are any Unitarians and Universalists in this hall, what I say regarding Orthodox Christianity, with its long bloody history, they will know does not apply to them. The Arians in the fourth century were very much like the modern Unitarians. They were peaceably disposed people. They did good as far as they were able, and they were treated shamefully and cruelly by the Orthodox party, who were in the majority. The early Universalist preachers of America were treated just as badly as Modern Spiritualists would be if the Orthodox churches were in full power. Universalism does not appeal to man's fear, nor does it preach the devil; neither does Unitarianism; and, therefore, Universalism and Unitarianism may be considered as religions because they *do* appeal to man's better nature. But the Orthodox minister, who is continually speaking to men's fears, and leading people to believe that they must repent in this life just because if they do not it will be very hard for them in the world to come, does not stir up the divine life in his congregation. Do you think that those people who abstain from sin through fear of being found out and punished, are people who are virtuous at heart? Certainly not! Religion must appeal to man's better nature, not to his fear of hell. Anything that simply appeals to man's fear of hell, in so far as it does this is irreligious.

Prof. Phelps says again that the pulpit achieves much if it teaches effectually that the Christian faith is true, and the "drift" of Spiritualism is altogether wrong morally, and that the Christian conscience cannot but be blurred by such communion with the spirit world. Then the Christian must decidedly not follow Jesus Christ. If I am to be tried and condemned at a Christian bar for holding communion with spirits, where will you put Jesus when he, on the Mount of Transfiguration, talked with Moses and Elias? Here you have no angelic loophole to escape through. These were men. Moses and Elias were human spirits, and Jesus in the moment of his transfiguration communicated with human spirits; and thus to do what Jesus did in the moment of his highest exaltation is to do what is most offensive to the Christian religion as interpreted by Prof. Phelps. This is not surprising, because *his* religion is exactly the reverse of the religion of Jesus; and just because we admire Jesus and believe his religion to be so simple and true, we have no sympathy with the Orthodox Christian system. Jesus said unto his disciples: "These *signs* shall follow them that believe." What right has Prof. Phelps to bring up the text: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign," and use it against Spiritualism? Jesus, before he ascended into the spiritual world, said: "These

signs shall follow them that believe." If Jesus meant that *no* signs should be given to us, following our teachings, would he have told us what signs we might expect? And if we are told to expect a sign, is it not likely that Jesus will keep his word? To believe in the veracity of Jesus is, according to Prof. Phelps, to be "evil and adulterous," for Jesus said, "These signs shall follow them that believe," and Prof. Phelps makes out every true believer an adulterer. They do not follow all people, and are now almost wholly withdrawn from the church in consequence of its unfaithfulness. Jesus works outside of the churches because the church creeds are so very small that he cannot get his large soul into such infinitesimal quarters. [Applause.]

Prof. Phelps says even more on this point; his words are:

"Make the Church a unit against it [Spiritualism], and it can live only as one of the religious monstrosities of the times which, like Mormonism, do not carry weight enough to make them respectable. No body of men can long hold up in broad daylight a thing which the judgment of the Christian Church has put under the ban. That thing must become offensive to the moral sense of men. It must rot."

Do the scientists of to-day ask permission of the church to advocate their theories? Do the very respectable people who sit at the feet of the material scientist ask whether the churches endorse every scientific theory, or whether they do not? And are all those scientists who hold the very highest positions in all parts of the civilized globe to be regarded as disreputable? To use the remarkably chaste language of Prof. Phelps, must their theories "rot"? Has not Darwinism dared to hold up its head while the Christian church and Prof. Phelps have not endorsed it? Have not scientists continued to advance truths as they have discovered them in spite of the efforts of the Evangelical churches to suppress them? Has not Mormonism, on the contrary, sunk because it is a revolt against human nature—its decline having really almost nothing to do with the opinion of any church concerning it, but a great deal to do with the opinions of physiologists? Col. Ingersoll is just as much opposed to Mormonism as Prof. Phelps can be, and certainly Ingersoll is not supported by the churches. Three thousand people will often gather in a hall, and pay an admission fee, to listen to Col. Ingersoll, and has not the Church put its ban upon his lectures? How is it that he can get large audiences of respectable people? How is it that Mr. Bradlaugh in England could make his way to an election to Parliament when all the churches were most resolutely opposed to him? How is it that day after day, and year after year, the churches are obliged to make concession after concession to the world in order that they may induce people even to come into them? How is it they cannot get audiences in many places unless they engage the very finest music? These signs show the very high estimation in which the Evangelical churches are held by the people. As a rule the religious newspapers of to-day state that the minister's position is not at all what it used to be, and that the churches have no such influence over the thought of the world as they had fifty years ago. And why have they lost their influence? They have lost it entirely because they have abused their power. When the churches were in power, if they had dealt mercifully and justly; if they had allowed room for growth, and had not tyrannized over the minds and souls of men, they would have been Houses

of God and Gates of Heaven until this day. A liberal church is a great blessing. A church may be the centre of great usefulness. But because the churches have abused their power, over all the civilized world men are turning away from them in disgust. Look at them in Germany. Germany has been considered the most enlightened land on the face of the earth. German scientific and literary attainments are proverbially great; yet neither the Catholic nor the Protestant Church has practically any hold at all in Germany to-day. And in the face of these facts, Prof. Phelps says he only requires the opposition of the Church in order to effectually silence all spiritualistic speakers and exterminate all spiritualistic influences. When modern scientists are investigating Spiritualism and finding that it is true, do you think that the intelligent masses will be frightened by the warning that if they dare to encounter the antagonism of the Church, they will imperil their soul's salvation and forfeit their respectability? The Churches are the causes of much modern infidelity; and if they had not preached such atrocious doctrines as they are now just beginning to leave off preaching, Spiritualism would scarcely have been needed to convince men of a rational hereafter, and to clear away mystery concerning a future life. Why is Mormonism objected to? Merely because it is unnatural and unhealthy. For a man to have many wives is for him to degrade himself and to degrade the women with whom he associates, and sow seeds of depravity and disease in the future generations.

Physiology protests against Mormonism; the necessities and the rights of children expose the errors of the Mormon system; and men from their knowledge of human life, and the requirements of the human mind and body, turn naturally with disgust against anything which is so direful in its consequences. It is not the Christian Church which has caused the decay of Mormonism; it is the average intelligence of the majority of citizens of the whole country: Man's acquaintance with himself, and his innate sense of justice, prove to him that there is to be found in sensuality the fruitful cause of every conceivable evil. Man can learn by practical experience here that a life of chastity is the most pleasing life, and a life which makes him the most useful to his fellow-creatures, and by looking at the highest among the lower creations he can learn that the very best and highest animals are those whose lower propensities have been kept in check by those who understand something of the science of life. Certainly the Church has exerted some influence against Mormonism, but we find all intelligent people are a unit against it, condemning polygamy on purely physiological grounds. We affirm that it is not because the Church says it is wrong, but because human nature rebels against it, that it cannot thrive.

If you can prove that Spiritualism degrades human nature; if you can impress the enlightened men and women of to-day that their minds or their bodies are impaired by their having anything to do with Spiritualism, then all common sense people will shrink from it. And if this can be done there will be no need of resuscitating the devil. But Prof. Phelps, finding that he cannot put down Spiritualism by organizing a rational crusade against it, as reason does not show any injury which it does in the world, is obliged to implore the devil to come to the rescue. [Applause.]

Again we quote the learned Professor: "May not still more be accomplished by a thorough re-discussion in the pulpit of the teachings of the Bible on the subject of ancient magic?" Any one who knows anything about magic, knows very well that there are various kinds of magic, and that magicians of a high order in all lands have encouraged red and white magic, and have protested against black magic. And any one who has ever read the Bible, as Prof. Phelps ought to have read it before he talks about it, knows this; also, the Bible tells us that when Joseph, a man after Jehovah's own heart, occupied the very highest position in the land of Egypt, his divining cup was found in the sack of Benjamin, his younger brother, and the servant sent to recover it said: "Think ye not that such a man as my master divineth?" A man who occupies the highest position in the land of Egypt, and has been placed there by God, according to the Bible, is a diviner—that is, one who practices the art of divination; and the argument which is brought forward to justify his divination is that he is so great a man that of course he practices it. All great people in early times and Eastern lands were magicians, while they forbade the common people to exercise their gifts for various reasons.

Were not the prophets of old merely spiritual mediums? If the Bible tells you anything against Spiritualism it tells you only that you are to discountenance the perversion of mediumship. It never advises you to have nothing to do with and discredit all spiritual gifts. Black magic is running after false gods, the worshiping of golden calves, the indulgence of impure practices, and submitting to unclean spirits. This is denounced by all wise prophets of all times as well as by Prof. Phelps. Is not his God the Jewish Jehovah? And what is the Jewish Jehovah? Is he not a Concrete Being, or a conglomeration of beings? Some of those beings are pure and beautiful, and others are of the very lowest moral type. And if you wish to find any instances of diabolism in the Old Testament you will find that more evil results have followed from obeying Jehovah than from disobeying him. For Jehovah has told man to slaughter innocent women and children—commanded them to behave in so disgusting a manner that the recital of their crimes would be impossible on this platform before a refined audience.

Who constituted the Jehovah of the Jews? Not one spirit, but many. The vice of the Jew was that he bowed down to every spirit, and acknowledged the right of all outside intelligences to rule over him. If we are to do the same, and obey the church as blindly as the Jews obeyed their corrupt Genii, may we not behold a similar exhibition of unclean gods? Remember that in obedience to the God of the Old Testament, men were cut into pieces alive, and that in obedience to the God of Christianity in the sixteenth century men were burned at the stake.

Jesus came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Jesus came not to magnify the law of retaliation, but to enforce the law of love. He came to appeal to the higher sensibilities of man's nature, and all his teachings do so.

Take the Bible, and you can prove anything out of it. The Bible is a very good book. It contains the most valuable suggestions and the most perfect laws possible in a crude age; but it contains, beside this, a great deal of rubbish and a great deal of uncleanness. You know

very well there are many passages in the Bible which purport to be communications from Jehovah which you would not dare to read on a public platform or in the schoolroom. You know you would be ashamed to allow your children to read the Bible completely through, because of passages which are so disgusting that you cannot bear to have your children look upon the page where they are written. Were these communications from God? from the guardian angels of the Jewish people, from pure and holy spirits? *No!* they were not. They were communications from the corrupt and tyrannical priesthood, who wallowed in the mire of sensuality, and who ruled with a rod of iron; they made their own wicked laws, and allowed them selves to be victimized by unclean spirits, who pretended that they were under the influence of God.

I admit, with Prof. Phelps, that there is a great deal of iniquity practiced in the name of Spiritualism; I acknowledge that many communications are listened to and attended to which come from unholy and unhappy souls; I acknowledge that the record of Spiritualism is not altogether clean, and I testify that the Bible, and the Bibles of all ages, and that common-sense everywhere, protest against holding communion with undeveloped spirits, and allowing them to get the better of us. But I do frankly say that I never have heard of any spirit so disgusting as the Jewish Jehovah. I am certain the *Banner of Light*, or any spiritualistic paper, would not allow such communications to enter its columns as are crowded thickly upon the pages of the books of the Chronicles and the Kings.

I believe that in the past, as well as in the present, men have prostituted their energies and degraded their mediumistic powers, and that by so doing they have allowed themselves to become obsessed by unclean spirits. I know that there have been persons willing to give up everything for popularity, and communications which have come through them have been of an impure nature. I know this to be true; but until I find something which is worse, or, to say the least, as bad as that which is swallowed by the Church, because it claims to be a command of Jehovah, I shall certainly consider that Jehovah, which Prof. Phelps worships as God, no better than the vilest spirit. But as there are also evidences of angelic inspiration, both now and in the past, let Prof. Phelps and his colleagues and followers learn to draw the line between true and false Spiritualism, if they are to be listened to by rational beings. They may well display all their powers and use all their invectives against the evil if they but acknowledge and endorse the good.

Let us have only that Spiritualism which is pure and fair, and which is a power in the land, making for righteousness; let us admit freely that there are many evils connected with Spiritualism; but let us remember that even these evils are allowed to take place; and that even the unholiest communications give us some evidence of the real condition of the unseen world. Even from the lowest spirit we can learn some good lesson. If spirits ever come back from the other side of life, lying, treacherous and impure, they are warnings to us. Do we wish to be as they are? Just as the pitiable condition of the drunkard is an eloquent oration in behalf of the temperance cause; just as the emaciated frame of some libertine is in itself a lecture upon the pernicious consequences of

immorality, even so an unveiling of the hells, of all that is false in the unseen world, and the presentation to you of spirits in the very mire of wickedness, is in itself an incentive to good. It is a warning against ungodliness. So while we admit that there is a great deal in Spiritualism which needs to be expurgated, while we believe that there are many communications unreliable and impure, we are sure that they are allowed to be made—and in the judgment of wiser spirits than we they are educational in their effects upon men as they destroy the delusion that we shall be purified by death, and introduced in a moment into future happiness, whether we deserve it or not. I maintain that unclean spirits have been allowed to appear in order to show men that they are not bound down in hell, but are living here, around this earth, and that they can be elevated by the assistance you can render them.

I am ready to believe, indeed I know, that these spirits flock around you and ask your assistance; that they can be elevated as your lives are improved; and as you need to learn the lessons of life and to know what the future world really is, these darker ones are allowed to appear. You receive a revelation concerning the results of vicious lives, and to know what these consequences are, is very often to be persuaded against indulgence.

Prof. Phelps goes on to state: "May we not wisely advance our mine still further and deeper under the foundations of the delusion by resuscitating the popular faith in the Biblical demonology?" And he proceeds to remark that "we are suffering from an extreme reaction," and that it would be well to encourage all reasonable faith in the devil; he then endeavors most vainly to prove what he believes, viz: that God allows evil spirits to roam the universe at large, while the pure, the beautiful and the wise are altogether unable to interfere.

Now, think of this conception of God: Here is a pure, noble man, like President Garfield, called into the spirit-world in the very midst of his activities—only for a few months having occupied the presidential chair before being called upon suddenly to pass into the spiritual state of being. God says to President Garfield: "You can come up here to heaven, but you cannot have anything to do with the material world any longer. You cannot do any more good there. You cannot assist your fellow-men forward. You cannot communicate with them. That is impossible; but come up to heaven and be satisfied with your crown and golden harp." Children lose a dear mother, and that tender-hearted mother turns to God and says: "Can I be the guardian angel of my child? I love my child more dearly than my own life. May I protect and minister unto my child?" And God says: "No, you cannot! But you may come up to heaven and receive your crown and play your golden harp." But according to the churches, when the devil asks God: "May I lead your children into error?" God says: "Oh! yes. You may do so and welcome. You can do all the harm you like. I shall put no fetters upon you; you are free to exercise all your devilish powers!" And the devil goes about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," while hosts of imps go about and assist him in his work. Prof. Phelps clearly teaches that the good spirits must remain shut up in heaven, and be satisfied to relinquish all interest in human affairs, leaving humanity and their own dearest friends in charge of the devil

—and thus the angel friend who purports to minister unto the child as a mother is a devil who is allowed to personate that child's mother.

I dare to state that this faith, at the shrine of which Prof. Phelps is a devotee, is blasphemy. [Applause.]

God will not let your mother come to you and help you, but causes the devil to array himself like your mother, and use your mother's face and words! Am I to believe in a God so deceitful as that? Am I to believe in a God who will not allow a good spirit to come near you, but allows the devil to impersonate your relatives and friends? If you are willing to make merchandise of your spiritual gifts, and to make your living in a shameful way, as certain people do; if you are investigating Spiritualism in order to deceive your fellow creatures, then it serves you right if he allows the devil to impersonate your friends. But if you are a kind-hearted and honorable father; or a pure-minded matron or maiden, or a member of a select circle, the members meeting for the purposes of inquiring into truth, and the devil comes to you arrayed in the garb of an angel of light to lure you to destruction, must not God, if he allows that devil to do what he will not let an angel do, love to see souls lying in anguish, and must he not wish to give his kingdom over to the devil?

I dare not pursue this subject any further, or say more in connection with this branch of it; it is so positively blasphemous to attribute to God the actions and the motives which are clearly attributed to him in Prof. Phelps's article. [Applause.]

The devil created as an angel of light and allowed to follow you throughout your lives; a hell created for the devil, and the devil allowed to get as many people as possible into it; and saints allowed to go up to heaven and rejoice forever at the sight of the suffering of the damned: *There* are the leading figures in the Orthodox farce. Do you wonder that infidel lecturers are drawing large and influential audiences, while such are the teachings of the churches?

I turn from this black picture of the devil which is to be forced upon us by clergymen who are uncertain about his existence themselves; and from this revolting spectacle of an angry God who deceives his creatures; and from the clergymen who do not know that such a God exists, while they preach about him so freely, to the sublime teachings of Spiritualism, and there I find teachings harmonizing perfectly with the religion of Jesus and all great teachers, doctrines and evidences satisfactorily convincing to every human mind, who will dismiss prejudice and allow facts to speak for themselves. Spiritualism says to you truly: My dear friends, God is loving; God is just; God is the infinite foundation of integrity. Your mother, your father, your brother, your sister, your teachers, your counselors and your ancestors are around you, and are helping you forward, day by day and hour by hour. And those whom you have dearly loved on earth are your nearest friends in spirit. The Divine Energy in Nature is forever giving unto them the greatest possible power to help you. You can never be victimized by evil unless you encourage that which is unholy and impure in yourselves. Restraints are put upon evil beings by the workings of the immutable laws of Nature, and when they pass into the spiritual world they find themselves impotent. In the spiritu-

al world good spirits have all power given unto them; and every man who has lived a good life on earth has a greater power than the devil (so called), and may wield that power as he pleases; whereas the man who has lived a wicked life, who has debased himself, and entered into the spiritual world as a fiend, has no power at all to injure you unless you give it to him. The wicked spirit is fettered by its own crime, and hedged in by its own transgression. The haunting spirits, who have appeared in all ages of the world, have demonstrated the fact of the impotence and the bondage to which evil spirits are subjected; whereas the almost almighty power of intelligent and wise guiding spirits to overcome all the machinations of any individual or abstract Satan, proves to every intelligent mind that good is the positive power, and that good alone is the triumphant force in nature.

If there is anything in Spiritualism that is wicked, it is your own folly that made it so. If evil spirits have any power over you, they use your own impure magnetism against yourself; and whenever men and women will descend to lasciviousness, or any low practices, and encourage impure thoughts, they furnish materials which evil spirits may employ against them. Unless you play into their hands, and give them the force, they cannot use it against you, and will have no power to harm you. God has given to the good power in proportion to their goodness, and has given to the evil weakness according to their lack of spiritual unfoldment. Could you see into the spiritual world, and behold it as it really is; could you see the hosts that are working to-day for the emancipation of the world; could you see the tyrants and bigots who are striving against man's freedom, you would find that Prof. Phelps is under a pitiable delusion, and is being made use of by those very undeveloped spirits who have power over bigoted minds that will not welcome the light.

Good spirits do not advocate deception. They believe in honesty and straightforwardness, and they also believe in saying just what they really believe. They believe in letting the truth fight its own way, even though their cause for the time being seem to decline. They believe in starving to death in a garret for truth's sake, rather than in descending to deception in order to live luxuriously in palaces. If you cannot support a cause by telling the truth, then allow it to die its natural death.

I do not wish to say one word against Prof. Phelps. I do not wish to call in question the integrity of the man, but I oppose his blasphemous theory, and I do wish to defend God from the insults that have been heaped upon him by this his avowed servant. And I declare that it is my duty to do so now through the lips of another, as it was when I was upon the earth, known to the world as E. V. Wilson. In this discourse I have been greatly assisted by the band of guides regularly inspiring this instrument. To them I am deeply grateful for the privilege of addressing you to-day; perchance you have not recognized me fully; my own individuality I have tried to introduce, but, not being very familiar with this speaker, while my thoughts have reached you intact, their *clothing* has, however, in some instances been put upon them by the friends who have made the delivery of this lecture by me a possibility. To you I return grateful thanks for your kind and courteous attention. May all blessings rest upon you forever.

IN MEMORY OF OUR DEPARTED FRIENDS.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

During the past few months the hand of death has been very heavily laid upon this and many other nations. This remarkable year, 1881, has been verily the year when earthly life has come to an end in the experience of many of the world's greatest thinkers, statesmen, orators, poets and authors; and not only have these representative and public men and women been summoned from earth to their reward and recompense in a higher state of being, but very many private and humble individuals have been compelled to obey the imperative command of that silent and shrouded messenger whom men miscall death.

Only a few Sundays ago our service was a memorial one. Scarcely had we reassembled after the summer recess ere the news of our President's transition sped like lightning from shore to shore, awakening sorrow and sympathy in millions of breasts. The nation mourned her irrevocable loss; the churches, the various secular buildings dedicated to commercial enterprise, the private residences of our citizens, were draped in black and white, the black being the earthly expression of the natural grief of a nation at the loss of its chosen head, the white symbolical of the purity, justice and present happiness of the valiant soldier who, in the meridian splendor of his ripened manhood, has fallen on the field of life's battle, covered with wounds and glory. England mingled her tears with the copious drops which fell from Columbia's weeping eyes. Human sympathies, the tenderest emotions of which the heart is capable, were aroused at one and the same moment in myriads of breasts. The desolate mother, the broken-hearted widow, the bereaved children, all came in for a large share

of that kindly sympathy which, in the hour of pain and loss, is more precious than a mine of gold or caskets filled with richest gems.

We were all hallowed, softened in our feelings toward each other, as we wept in company with those whose grief was more immediate and poignant than our own. Materialism banished Garfield from us forevermore, and spoke of his removal as an evidence that there is no God, or that if there is one, he does not hear and answer prayer. Some of the churches, believing in his eternal life beyond the grave, put him so far away from us that we could not console ourselves even with the thought of his felicity and triumph in heaven; so great and varied were his powers and means of usefulness, we could not reconcile ourselves to his being taken away. Spiritualism, however, found him for us when we knelt weeping at his open grave, and through the organism of some of our most reliable and long-tried mediums he spoke to us, announcing himself as yet alive among us, taking part in all those deliberations which are fraught with most important consequences to the nation, yea, to humanity as a whole. His "heavenly home," he assures us, is here in our world, in the living sphere of souls which overshadows and inspires this planet, where, with his dear friend Abraham Lincoln and a host of other worthies, he is actively engaged in forming plans for the deliverance of the poor and the fettered from every species of slavery and degradation, and for the promotion of every noble effort to lift the country above the degradation of warfare and corruption.

Not only have we had to say good-by to the earthly frame of our illustrious President, but to take our last look at all that was material in

Lucretia Mott, E. H. Chapin, Epes Sargent, George Elliot, Benjamin Disraeli, Thomas Carlyle, Dean Stanley and Lydia Maria Child, men and women widely differing in character, opinions and modes of action, yet each and all representative persons, wielding a powerful influence over the minds of the literary and social world. Within a year or so more really distinguished persons have been removed from earth than are often removed in a quarter of a century. It would be invidious and altogether out of place for us here and now to institute comparisons between one and another of these famous persons; they have all done their own peculiar work, a work which no one else could have done so effectually. The reformer, the preacher, the writer, the novelist, the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the inventor, the statesman, the physician, are alike needful in a world such as this to minister to man's varied needs. One is not higher than another in the moral or spiritual scale, unless one is purer, more conscientious than another. He who sows and he who reaps, he who rules and he who serves, are equal, and equally useful and important, if alike sincere, faithfully discharging the duties attaching to their several offices with faithfulness and zeal.

In the eyes of man men are high or low, of great or of small account, because of their mighty or insignificant achievements on the field of battle or in the field of letters. In the eyes of angels oftentimes the lowliest ones of earth the brightest shine; and in the most exalted circles of heaven the crossing sweeper may be received as an honored member of the best society, while the monarch whom all the world caressed and fêted may be disowned as unworthy a place even among those who were beggars on earth, but whose rags concealed honest and generous souls.

We cannot too frequently strive to impress all of you with the idea of man's true equality with his brother man, and to point out wherein consist those differences which, being purely natural and necessary, contribute to the harmony of nature as a whole. Ye who are parents and guides of the young, ye who fill high positions, and stand at posts of honor, see to it that ye impress upon the minds of all your children and dependents the truth concerning the dignity of labor, and the necessity of each one qualifying himself to fill nobly his own niche in the vast temple of universal being. Have confidence in yourselves; believe that you are individually elected by the Supreme to do a work in the world which no one else can accomplish in your stead without frustrating the great design of the universe; for as toil is portioned out to each, no one can do another's work without neglecting his own, as the task allotted to each is sufficient to consume all his

time and exhaust all his energies, if he does his work conscientiously. True it is that all the very greatest of the world's workers have relied upon a strength superior to their own, looking to heaven for assistance in the performance of every duty. But while they looked to God and angels for strength and guidance, they did not act as though they expected divine beings to do their work for them. They believed indeed that divine strength would be made perfect in their weakness; but through them as channels did they ever expect the divine life to flow. No great man ever expected God to do his work for him, though many of the greatest have felt that God was working in, by and through them.

The doctrine of predestination, rightly understood and philosophically interpreted, is rational and helpful, though the Calvinistic view of it, and also the fatalist idea, is repugnant to man's highest intuitions and soundest judgment. To believe that God predestinates some of his children to eternal life and others to everlasting torture, is to represent him as a monster of cruelty and injustice; but to perceive a design in nature, a plan in the formation of the great temple of the soul, and to see every soul appointed therein to a certain place which he alone can fill, is to take of life the grandest possible view, and furnish to all, no matter what their circumstances or abilities, the most powerful incentive to hopeful and courageous action possible.

When speaking on the President we took occasion to remind you that the example of his life was peculiarly valuable and instructive to the people in general, on account of his having been one of them, born in a log cabin, making his way from obscurity to the White House by his own perseverance and honesty; so on this occasion do we specially emphasize the good effects the example of our risen brother, Calvin Tarbell, whose transition to the higher life we celebrate to-day, may have on the lives of all who knew him when on earth, and also among those who were never privileged to know him personally, but may hear from those who were blessed with his acquaintance, the recital of the many virtues which gave sublimity and power to his long and useful life. He was not a singular man, raised by accident of birth or training far above the ordinary level of men; he was one of you, living unostentatiously from year to year, to a ripe old age, celebrated only on account of his sterling moral qualities. Private heroism always seems to us grander than public displays of bravery. In an exciting moment, when a crowd of spectators is looking on, eagerly watching one's actions, ready to applaud valor, it is comparatively easy to play the hero's part. When trumpets are sounding, and eager crowds are

chained to their seats or made to stand in breathless expectancy and excitement by the burning words of a patriotic orator, summoning the youths of the land to join the army and fight for freedom, it is natural, under the influence of such strong excitement as these scenes produce, to leave home, kindred and all that is most dear to the heart, and fight like a tiger against the invader of the nation's safety. Bravery on the battle-field is always glorious; valor, chivalry, must never be despised; but is it not harder to fight one's way along for more than eighty years, enduring the hourly trials and vexations of life bravely when there are no great occasions for the display of valor, and no drums and fifes and comrades to spur the soldier on to endurance? Believe us when we tell you that in the eyes of the angels many a man and woman lives a braver and more chivalric life, who is never heard of outside of his or her own little circle of friends, than was ever lived by such men as Napoleon, Nelson, or Washington, great as they undoubtedly were. True it is, as the old proverb saith, "Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Thus may our humblest citizen become morally really greater than Darius or Alexander.

In the book of Revelation we are told of a great multitude whom no man can number, who have reached the heights of glory only by passing through "great tribulation." The words rendered thus may with equal appropriateness be translated out of the original tongue into "constant friction." Some souls seem to bear one great, crushing burden for a little while; others have to carry a less crushing weight, but their burden remains longer on their shoulders. A just retribution awaiteth all hereafter if not here, and those whose lives have been long, and interspersed with many sorrows the world knows not of, will find themselves just on a level in the spiritual kingdom with those whose lives have been briefer and whose anguish has been more intense. We are constantly confronted with the mystery of the removal of little children and very young persons to the unseen world; men often fail to see wherein lies the benefit to themselves and others which must accrue to them if the laws of nature are just and loving. We ourselves have not the least shadow of a suspicion that any "accident" ever overtakes any one which does not, in the long run, redound to his highest welfare. But many of the workings of God in nature are inscrutable; they can never be clearly understood by minds not yet anything like fully expanded, and we wonder not at the incredulity of modern skepticism, which, in its spiritual blindness, gropes its way in darkness, while the light of everlasting love is all the while illuminating the universe. We admit that it is hard to

reconcile the overruling and indwelling providence of God with the sudden removal from a centre of immense usefulness of one who, in the prime of life, is just beginning to ascend the ladder of fame, and who is sorely needed by wife, children and society at large, unless we have very clear views of the intimate connection always existing between the visible and invisible worlds; but on this occasion we have no difficulties to meet, no abstruse problems in theology or philosophy to solve.

Our ascended fellow-laborer lived out his full term of days, and died to the body only by reason of the natural wearing out of the structure, after long years of constant use. For more than fourscore years even did the noble spirit retain its occupancy of its earthly shrine, and when at length his earthly race was run, his passing out into eternity was natural, quiet and beautiful as the sleep of a tired child. Well may we speak of his transition as a "happy release." How glad and triumphant is that faithful spirit at this hour. No longer fettered by the infirmities of the flesh, his eye now is lustrous, his form erect, his step elastic. Could you gaze upon his benign countenance at this moment you would behold thereon no vestige of decay, no trace of pain, no hollow cheek, no sunken eye, no furrowed brow; you would not see him as an old man, suffering from the decrepitude of age, but as a young and yet mature spirit, combining the powers of early manhood with the mellow ripeness of age. Man is said to be in his prime at about thirty-three years of age. The early Christians almost universally believed that on the day of resurrection all faithful souls would be clothed in bodies apparently of this age, and that the blessing of perpetual youth and maturity combined would be their portion forever. This theory beautifully harmonizes with actual experiences in spirit-life. While we do not look forward to a day when Gabriel's trump will sound to wake the slumbering dead; while we never expect to reënter our cast-off forms of clay, all spirits acknowledge that they have bodies in the spheres, and that these forms are always indicative of interior development in the spirit-life, as no clothes and no environment can possibly be in the possession of a mind which has not merited all that clusters around it. Our friend's movements to-day are unlimited by the body of infirmity which in recent years oppressed him here. Death has for him only exchanged the corruptible for the incorruptible; the manacles and fetters of clay for a form which is an obedient servant of the soul.

On occasions like the present we do not approve of the once invariable custom of unduly and indiscriminately eulogizing the departed, making it appear that every one is an angel when he comes to die. Words spoken in response to the dictates of custom, and even

of kindly feeling for the mourners, savor largely of lip-service to which the heart is a stranger. A faithful heart asks not for our praise, rejoices not at our flattery; but when the heart is full, and "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," the testimony spontaneously given to the virtuous life and blessed example of an honored friend is only that heart's natural tribute of gratitude, which can no more be suppressed than the mountain torrent.

To-day our hearts are brimming over with feelings of gratitude to and respect for our ascended friend; and may we not be allowed the luxury of expressing, even though very imperfectly, something of what is in our soul? We cannot forget that he whose new birth we celebrate was for many years a firm and uncompromising Spiritualist; more than this, he was a spiritually-minded man; not a dealer in cant phrases and sentimental exhibitions of overwrought feeling, but a man who had on all occasions the courage of his convictions. He did not pause to inquire whether or no Spiritualism was fashionable when he advocated it. Was it true? If so, he could not do other than promulgate it. From the first he was a regular subscriber to the *Banner of Light*, the oldest and most influential spiritualistic newspaper in the world. He consistently and earnestly promoted all endeavors to sustain the public advocacy of the truths dear unto his soul, and was a true friend of every honest medium of whom he knew anything. His actions were neither rash, belligerent nor egotistical; his methods were rational and philosophic; he combined strength of will, force of character, with extreme gentleness and docility, and, though a man of vigorous mind, was tender in the extreme.

We cannot but remember with intense pleasure that it was in the parlors of his old home on Tyler street that we held our first social reception in this city, and that from that day to the date of his transition he has ever been our faithful and generous friend. His relation to this Society has always been that of a prominent member and warm supporter. To-day we do not mourn his loss; we cannot feel that his place among us knows him no more; for, though invisible to mortal eye, his happy and earnest spirit adds to the success of our ministrations, and to the profit you derive from the hallowing influences which throng this place. "He being dead yet speaketh"; dead to the flesh with all its cumbering cares and infirmities; alive in the spirit, he speaks unto you all burning words of zeal and love, his lips touched with a live coal from off the altar of eternal truth.

Natural grief is not to be rudely repressed. The tears of heartfelt sorrow are for all time sanctified; they are like true prayers—the unfeigned expressions of the heart's deepest feel-

ings. The very bravest and most distinguished men, as well as women, have been notable for the tenderness of their feelings; easily moved to tears at sight of others' grief, even when for their own anguish they would show no sign of pain. Jesus, knowing the certainty of Lazarus's resurrection, wept with his sisters at the open grave. But the grief of the true Spiritualist, who knows immortality to be a fact, is a totally different thing from the hopeless sorrow of the great unbeliever, Ingersoll, who, beside his brother's earthly remains, shed tears of despair, confessing by his very act and word to the failure of the materialistic theory of life to afford consolation and satisfaction in the hour of man's extremity. Ingersoll, though an infidel, is not satisfied with infidelity, and in his discourses plainly states that it is not his intention to crush hope, but only to deliver men's minds from the cruel bondage of degrading superstitions.

Some views of the future life are so terrible, so atrocious, that we do not wonder that those who have never seen the beauties of the liberal faith should turn away in disgust from a God of wrath and a gaping hell. Modern theology has so modified man's ideas of the future life that, even in churches where the creed is unaltered, the preaching is diametrically opposed to the teaching of former years. How large a portion of this change is due to our improved educational system, and how much to the silent, even more than to the openly expressed influence of Spiritualism, we shall not now attempt to discuss or to decide. It is not, however, out of place here to remark, that our risen brother found Spiritualism a religion good enough to live by, and also good enough to die by. He was never ashamed of his convictions; never afraid to let the world know he was a Spiritualist. He does not hold a high place among the invisibles to-day just because he believed when on earth in their existence and power to communicate with mortals; his present elevation is the result of his whole-souled integrity, his bravery of spirit, his resolution to defend his flag and let nothing detract from the honor of the truth as he perceived it.

We are sorely in need of brave men; we need a noble army of valiant soldiers who can set their faces like flint against the hosts of darkness in the day of battle. A truly conscientious man, be he Brahman, Buddhist, Jew, Christian, or Atheist, is a power for good in the land whether his opinions be erroneous or correct. Opinions change with every new discovery; they are built on the sliding sand of temporary attainment, but virtue is ever the same in every clime; in every age it speaks with one voice and is alike admirable. Persons certainly need not believe in the transmigration of souls in order to admire the saintliness of Gautama Buddha's

life; they may even think him a fanatic, one who acted unwisely and even wrongly, when he left his father's roof and his beautiful young wife to cast in his lot with the Brahmanical monks, who subsisted on alms and devoted themselves entirely to the contemplation of divine things. We may not all discover beauty in every recorded act and word of Jesus, and yet these characters endear themselves to us by reason of their wonderful sincerity. The self-sacrifice of these men stamps them forever with the seal of nobility. They bear with them the divine credentials of honor and purity; and the appeal they thus make to our affections, to our inmost souls, must ever transcend the power of eloquence and the profundity of intellectual research.

In this large assembly there are, no doubt, some who have learned to highly esteem our brother, whose religious ideas are foreign to his; but they, we are sure, will be no less willing to add their tribute to his praise than we who rejoice in the light which shone so clearly into his soul. His fidelity to all trusts, and his noble bearing in every family and social relation, raise him to a pedestal of greatness to which correctness of opinion alone could never lift him. You will miss him, but your loss will be more than counterbalanced by your gain. You may receive from him no visible sign of his nearness; no voice in the air may announce his presence; no radiant form may appear before your bodily eyes, but in the silence of the night your spirit and his will commune, and when you awake in the morning and go forth to your respective haunts and duties, the counsel, the guidance you were wont to seek and receive from him, will not be denied you. He and you will have met and conversed; soul will have answered unto soul, and through the blessedness of spiritual communion you will have received your dead restored unto you again, wiser, brighter and freer than he could have been on earth.

Death is indeed a mighty deliverer; the change it produces in a spirit's history is stupendous, for while the mere fact of dying does not alter character, desire or freedom, it gives unbounded liberty to the spirit to roam whithersoever thought leads the way. A spirit released from the body is like a bird let out of a cage. The canary cannot soar so high or remain on the wing so long as an eagle, even though it be equally unchained. The little bird just out of the egg has not the power of flight with which its parents are endowed, and yet it may be just as unfettered by the shell from which it has broken loose. Even so the freedom and power of spirits will vary. The good and the wise can travel where the impure and the foolish cannot. In the unseen world all power is the result of moral or intellectual

attainment; and thus the theory that evil spirits have more power than good ones is shown to be an absurdity on the face of it. Prof. Phelps's article in a recent issue of the *Congregationalist* can never commend itself to any who believe in a sensible God, to say nothing of believers in a loving God, because he takes the ground that wicked spirits are allowed to traverse space at will and lure us into sin, while our dear relatives and friends are banished from us, even though they may be sharing unalloyed felicity in realms of glory. Be assured that there is no law in nature allowing fiends to assail you, and at the same time forbidding the darlings of your heart to draw nigh and bless you: heaven could not exist for the mother were she disabled from communicating with her child.

Be careful not to confound external evidences of spirit-presence with spirit-presence itself as a reality. We are frequently most powerfully acted upon by our unseen helpers when we know it not; frequently we think of them in consequence of their proximity to us and action upon us, and when we are crying out for them, and importuning them to manifest to us, they are themselves the present cause of those desires of ours; they are longing to make us realize their nearness, and, in their very efforts to convince us that they are nigh, they cause us to sigh for fuller and freer communion with them. Every time a brave and true heart is summoned from earth we are apt to feel sad, as though we and our fellows had sustained an irreparable loss; but it is verily expedient for us that our loved ones go away. A great teacher of old strove to console his sorrowing friends with the blessed assurance that when he came to them in spirit as the comforter he could do more for them than he could possibly do by remaining with them in the form. By taking away the body he divested himself of his limitations; he was no longer as arbitrarily localized as before, for, while spirits are no more ubiquitous than mortals, their speed of travel equals the speed of thought, and thus from Calcutta to San Francisco is to the spirit scarcely a moment's journey. So long as a loved one lingers in the form his especial presence is denied to all save the few privileged friends who live in the same house or town with him; but when death ensues the barriers are removed; from place to place the soul can flit with lightning speed, so that, no matter where or when his services may be desired or needed, he can actually come to you and give you all an equal share in his ministrations. The very fact of it being harder for you to realize the presence of a spirit than a mortal is in itself a blessing, because the very effort to unfold the powers of the inner man refines and beautifies your life on earth, and prepares you for the great change whenever it comes.

A lament is often expressed very naturally that all our stalwart old workers are passing to the spirit world, and many on earth are daily inquiring as to who will be found ready and able to fill their places. The great preachers in the liberal pulpits of days gone by, where are they now? Upon whom has their mantle fallen? Who is there to take Theodore Parker's place in Boston Music Hall, and address an audience of three thousand earnest listeners every Sunday? Who are to occupy the thrones left vacant here in Boston by the transition of Channing and Starr King? Who is to be in the Universalist ranks what Dr. Chipin has been? Truly these men and many others rose to sublime heights on great occasions. In anti-slavery days the issues at stake in the nation were so tremendous that men felt an impetus and an inspiration to action and speech which they do not feel in these more pacific times. Truly the events of to-day are not so stirring as those of twenty years ago, and hence our oratory and literature are not so thrilling. A great demand always produces an equally large supply, and no doubt the seeming paucity of very great minds at this hour is rather due to the lesser need for great public demonstration. But let us all remember that the great men were the men who brought all their energies to a given point; who focused their forces and lent all their talents to one supreme end. A truly great man may be great in many ways, but when occasion demands he has a wonderful faculty of calling all his powers together, and, marshaling his forces, evolve the lightning and the thunder of speech or action which, while it startles and electrifies the people, purifies the moral air, ridding it of the foul miasma born of long uninterrupted corruptions. Not only does the great man thus know how to concentrate his abilities, but he never leaves for another the work he can do himself.

If we are to take the places left vacant on earth by the promotion of our distinguished forerunners, there is nothing in the world to prevent us from becoming as great as they—yea, greater, if we will but be as single-eyed and whole-souled as they. It will not be by admiring their good qualities that we shall truly emulate them. Hero-worship is a powerful incentive to action; but if all stood by and gazed at others' doings, the race of great men would have become extinct. Cannot you yourselves, with the assistance of those whom you admire ever inspiring you, perform works greater than any they have wrought? Cannot you rise to loftier eminences than they have ever attained, as their wisdom, greater now than ever before, is added to your own in the great work of life? Your spirit-friends crave your coöperation; they petition you for your assistance; you can help them as well as be

helped by them, for they are largely dependent upon you for the success of their laudable endeavors to enlighten humanity. Maccabees, when calling attention to the condition of the departed, says: "It is a good and a wholesome thought that ye pray for the dead." If our friends on earth are ever helped by our prayers, certainly our friends in invisible spheres may be. But what are true prayers? The man who prays "lead us not into temptation," and then leads his fellow-beings into all manner of temptations by taking a mean advantage of their necessities, and so underpaying them for their work that their wages will scarcely allow them to keep soul and body together, is more responsible for their misdoings than they themselves. He who prays truly is he who works manfully to aid in bringing to pass that which he fervently desires.

We have no sympathy with the Romish idea of Purgatory; we can place no faith in the efficacy of masses offered for suffering souls by priests who are anxious to get possession of the money of the friends of the deceased; we believe not in a purgatorial fire consuming the rust of sin which needs to be burned off a spirit who dies in venial though not in mortal sin, though we certainly maintain that there are spheres of probation beyond the grave. But in these spheres souls do not lie passive while God's hand lies heavily upon them, as theologians of the Romish faith teach. They overcome their frailties; they atone for earthly errors by doing good unto the humanity they once wronged. Every kindly thought and deed returns upon us in blessing, as the moisture rising from the earth again descends upon it; as the clouds always give back to the earth that which they have received from it, and the clouds again are repaid for all they have showered upon the thirsty land. Whether in the form of pearly dewdrops or copious showers of rain, in the great economy of nature every one receives his just deserts. If we have harbored thoughts of wrong against our neighbors, these very thoughts, finding a lodgment in our own spheres, will cast back upon us their dark reflections, making our future homes dark, when they might be bright and fair had we only encouraged pure desires. Every one does for himself what he wishes to do for another; all the good we wish our neighbors we attract; and whether it reaches them individually or not, it blesses us; all the harm we wish them is drawn into our own surroundings, and forms part of the obstacles impeding our progression. The penalty of lying in this world is the inconvenience of never being able to believe anything that we are told. As man always judges the world by himself, we invariably suspect others of doing exactly what we should do were we in their places. The impure man denounces all

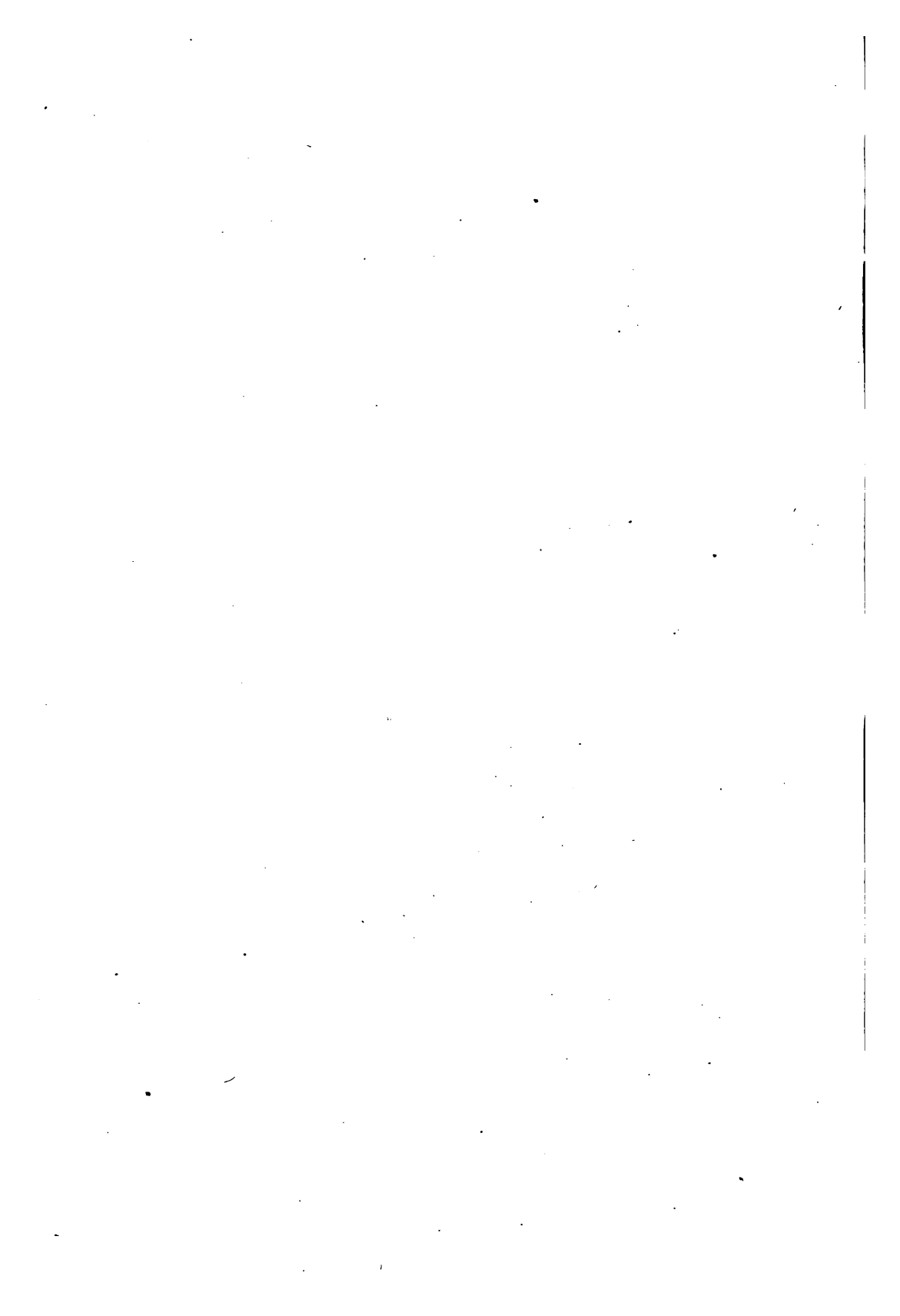
his brethren as libertines, whether he knows anything of their characters or not. The thief believes everybody is dishonest, and is tortured in consequence with the perpetual dread of his companions stealing from him. Jesus takes a poor adulteress by the hand, and softly saying, "Where are thine accusers? doth no man condemn thee?" fails to be satisfied of her guilt, and stretches out the hand of compassion and deliverance, with the simple yet wondrously powerful words, "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." This woman comes to him after a while not only penitent but grateful, willing to exhaust her funds in showering upon his feet the costly tribute of her grateful affection.

No matter whether this legend is true or not, human experience to-day furnishes multitude of similar illustrations of the attitude of a really pure person toward one suspected of wrong. Never does purity sanction impurity; never does it endorse crime or label it virtue; but, recognizing in all some latent divinity, it appeals to that; it strives to fan the flickering spark of right feeling into a flame, and whether in this life or in another, whether immediately or a thousand years hence, this course of action will always meet its reward and redound to the unspeakable welfare of both donor and recipient. Love never faileth; tongues may cease, eloquent lips may be speechless in the cold embrace of death; hope may be lost in the glories of fulfilled expectations; prophecy may cease, signs and wonders may vanish away; but love, the all-constraining force in the universe which ever makes for righteousness, will live in itself and in its works forever and forever.

It was a misconception of truth that led Shakspeare to declare by the lips of one of his characters: "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." The evil that men do lives after them, perchance, as an atmospheric spirit like that strange emanation from the corpse believed in by the "Berlin Brotherhood" alluded to in that valuable occult work, "Ghost-Land," while the good lives forever like the fair resurrected Constance, whose pure spirit, retaining its every individual power, speaks in accents of undying love to cheer the heart of her desponding friend, and teach him the blessed truth of man's immortality, sought in vain by the sensuous experimentalists, whose earth bound minds utterly fail to reach out into the realities of the spiritual universe. A materialist may be a very good moral man; there can be no grander life than the life of the Atheist who lives for his fellow-men, straining every nerve to promote their interests while he expects for

himself no future punishment for sin and no reward for goodness. Honest Atheism is not a crime, and never ought to be treated as such. To be an Atheist from necessity and not from choice, as many good-meaning people are to-day, is an affliction, not a fault. No more ought we to be angry because all men's spiritual eyes are not open, than offended because men's physical eyes are sometimes closed; but as we do not go to the blind man to ask his opinion on the selection of colors, as we do not appoint a deaf man to the office of musical critic, neither do we appeal to a man avowedly agnostic in his views for a definite reply to the query, "Where are our dead, and what are they doing?" The answer comes not from book or priest or church, but from the living souls of the departed; we having the witness of their spirits testifying to the correctness of the intuitions of our own.

Where are our dear ones? What are they doing? Ages might be consumed in answering these queries, and the whole reply not be given, as every spirit's experiences in the future, as in the present, are individual, and peculiar to himself. Every soul, however, passing from the shores of time is aware of possessing capacities unexhausted. The painter, gazing at his own masterpiece, while thousands stand in speechless admiration before his marvelous work, and see no blemish therein, stands himself humbled, tearful, as he discovers blemish after blemish in his greatest effort. His soul soars beyond the canvas, sees another picture, infinitely more beautiful, and hopes against hope that some day hands may be forthcoming which shall faithfully transmit to canvas the soul's ideal conception. Every life is a picture; every spirit an artist. In the hour of death the scenes of life pass before the vision of the departing spirit with a vividness indescribable. No matter how clean the record, how great the attainment; conscious of manifold shortcomings the soul cries out to the great Spirit of Nature: "Give me a chance to live a more perfect life than this." The soul's petition never goes unanswered, but the opportunity for everlasting improvement stretches out before the emancipated mind, even into the eternity which baffles even an angel's loftiest thought. Thither, into that eternity, our noble brother goes, to work out in yet fuller measure the rich potencies of his soul. You may be his assistants; through you may he work to greater perfection, and not only he, but all your especially loved ones. Be ye faithful as he was, faithful to the angel voice, and a crown of life will the angel Death place on your every brow.



THE TRUE GIFT OF HEALING: HOW WE MAY ALL EXERCISE IT.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

Our subject to-day is one of great interest and vast importance. It is of special interest at this time, since the attention of the public is being turned to Mesmerism by Prof. Carpenter's exhibitions of psychologic power in Tremont Temple; hence it is easy to gather a company of inquiring minds, and discourse to an attentive audience on this fascinating and highly instructive theme. We are also led to remember that the father of Prof. Phelps, of Andover, of whose writings in the *Congregationalist* we have had much to say of late, was a believer in the existence and usefulness of animal magnetism, and that in his own published words he endorsed fully and freely the doctrines of Mesmer and his followers. Dr. Eliakim Phelps was a learned and estimable gentleman, a good scholar, and an ornament to the Christian pulpit, in which he faithfully ministered for many years. We quote from a published writing of his entitled, "Thoughts on the Philosophy of Laying On of Hands as a Remedial Agency in the Treatment of Disease, Suggested by a Person in the Higher Magnetic State." You perceive at once, by the very title of his work, that he endorsed fully the mesmeric theory, as he unqualifiedly states that persons can be put into a "higher magnetic state," and in that state suggest to him thoughts worthy of publication on the all-engrossing theme of disease and its treatment. His words, to which we desire to call your especial attention, read as follows: After describing a very remarkable cure practiced on his own son, he says, "In the process of magnetizing there is a fine purple fluid, invisible in the natural state, but distinctly perceptible in the magnetic, which passes from the magnetizer to the person mag-

netized; thus in the case of my son, he said as soon as I began to make passes over him he could see little threads of purple light come out from my hands and eyes, more especially from my hands, which came to him, and soon pervaded every part of his system. This fluid, he said, was *the power of life*; that in every healthy person the working of the animal functions produces this fluid, or power of life, in sufficient quantities for the purposes of life, and in most cases more, so that a healthy person can impart a portion of it to a less healthy one."

We will not quote further from this extremely interesting and valuable treatise, but content ourselves with merely saying that Dr. Phelps institutes a comparison between this power employed by men and women to-day, and the remarkable secret force which enabled Jesus and his immediate followers to perform their marvels of healing, as recorded in the New Testament. We are informed that cures were wrought by the laying on of hands, everywhere. The power of the will and the use of animal magnetism are blended. From the garments of Jesus, and also from those of the apostles, we are told a healing virtue went forth; and the great teacher is reported as having said on more than one occasion, "I perceive that virtue has gone out of me." Now what is that "virtue" but vitality; the very power of life, without which no living creature could continue to exist?

We should not, perhaps, have specially introduced to you the words of Dr. Phelps on this occasion, had it not been for the fact that his other son has attracted considerable attention by his charge to the Christian ministry concerning its treatment of Spiritualism. Genius is not always an inheritance in families, it is true,

neither is spiritual discernment, else a man with so well-informed and liberal-minded a father would scarcely have gone back to the superstitions of the dark ages, and attributed all spiritual power to the devil. We should be very glad to read a sermon from the pen of Prof. Austin Phelps upon the text, "Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" in view of the truly remarkable cures performed to-day by spiritual mediums, who, according to his own statement, are under Satanic influence. Congregationalism is a wide word; Orthodoxy a very narrow one. A Congregationalist may be a very intelligent, liberal man, like the author we have quoted; but an Orthodox minister, while he need not be a Congregationalist, must be a person whose views are so narrow and bigoted that they can only coincide with what is narrowest and blindest in Congregationalism, or any other 'ism.

To proceed at once to a consideration of the healing gift, let us remark at the outset that every person is naturally a healer, and that without healing power you would have no vital power. Metaphysicians as a rule deny the existence of matter; they consider this world an unreality; they teach that pain and disease are delusions, and that mind and spirit are the only realities in nature. The subtle Oriental mind delights in metaphysics, the subtleties of thought in Asia being so great that it is an extremely difficult task to translate the Vedas and Puranas into intelligible English. Brahmanism and Buddhism will always be Ethnic, never Catholic, religions. They were cradled in Asia; they appeal to the Oriental mind charmed with mystery; but to Western people they can never be attractive as systems, though we may all unite in admiring the purity of the moral teaching at their base, and delight in contemplating the extreme sanctity and wonderful self-sacrifice of many who embraced them. Christianity cannot make much progress in Asia because it is too prosaic, too literal, too matter-of-fact. The same may be said of Judaism, to a large extent. Buddhism can never become popularized in the United States or England because it is too poetical, too allegorical, too mystical. Swedenborgianism is not attractive to the multitude, because only imaginative and mystical minds can fathom its depths and comprehend its meanings. Mrs. Glover-Eddy and others who style themselves "Christian Scientists" have, no doubt, a great many very fine and true ideas in their system, but they ignore too much of the practical side of life to be readily understood by the masses.

Dr. Baker Fahnestock, author of a very interesting work entitled "Statuvolism," has a method, and a very good one, for the cure of disease, but he also ignores altogether man's physical nature; while Dr. Gregory, in his val-

uable contribution to the literature of mesmerism, "Animal Magnetism," happily combines many ideas and systems, and is sufficiently eclectic and inclusive to render himself plain to the comprehension of the people at large. We are informed by the highest spiritual authorities we have ever consulted that there exists in nature a trinity of elements—spirit, force and matter—and that these three are coëxistent and coëternal. Spirit is intelligence, force is immaterial substance, and matter the element visible to your external sense. The very existence of disease as a substantial reality is denied by many mystics. We unite with them in thus denying its existence, but as a transient state it is a reality, just as darkness is a real state but not a positive substance.

Will-power is more potential than animal magnetism, but the existence of animal magnetism can be proved beyond the power of any successful contradiction, for animal magnetism is neither more nor less than the heat and moisture constantly exuding through the pores of the skin of every living being. This warmth and moisture is physical substance in vaporized form. You all know that matter can exist in four forms—solid, fluid, gaseous and ethereal. This gaseous condition of matter, which is the condition of all the materials which leave the body of a living man or animal, can be analyzed by any chemist who has the requisite appliances with which to work. These animal magnetic emanations are not always healthful, as it is through the circulation in the atmosphere of impure magnetism that diseases are often conveyed from one person to another; but it would be a terrible libel on the laws of Nature to assert that they had decreed the transference of disease but forbade the transference of good health. We all of us know that small-pox, scarlet fever, and other maladies of a virulent and distressing nature, may be communicated from a sufferer to an apparently healthy person, if the seemingly well person simply touches a towel or napkin upon which the patient has wiped his hands. Now, this simple transference of disease to articles of wearing apparel, etc., and thence to another human organism, proves conclusively that without either will-power exerted by the patient, or fear crippling the resisting powers of the subject, ill health may be communicated from one to the other.

These facts utterly destroy the theories of those who deny to matter a real existence, and persistently ignore vital magnetism as a curative agent. If will-power were necessary to produce a purely physical result, then no diseases could be transferred from one person to another unless the person diseased willed the other to be contaminated; and if no one could catch an infectious disorder unless he dreaded it, it would be impossible for contagion to

exist were people kept ignorant of the prevalence of infectious disorders. Our advice to all stalwart unbelievers and positive deniers of what they know nothing concerning is to follow the example of Rev. O. B. Frothingham, who says that he has resolved to give up blindly denying in certain directions and wait for more light. The work of science is to prove affirmations, not to indulge in negative assumptions. We can prove a negation in this sense, that if animal magnetism does exist, the theory of its non-existence is erroneous; for if twice two are four, then two and two cannot make three or five; but you see instantly that to prove an affirmation is necessary in order to prove that its opposite can have no existence; two bodies cannot inhabit the same spot of earth at the same time, and two existences in the realm of mind cannot fill the same spiritual space at once. So, two opposing theories cannot both be true.

We have told you simply what you all know concerning disease and the multiplication-table, but it is often necessary in order to combat error that we traverse well-trodden ground to fortify an assailed, though well-established position. This is indeed an age of skepticism; but modern doubt is a useful and healthful reaction from old-time superstition; from believing everything without evidence, men have come to believe almost nothing; the new faith will be belief founded upon the most satisfactorily conclusive evidence, and a faith which shall be ever receiving the addition of knowledge. Psychometry is a wonderful key to the hidden arcana of nature. The psychometrist is often an independent clairvoyant, or *lucide*; sometimes, however, a very fine medium. A clairvoyant is one who sees through extreme sensitiveness of visual perception objects and forces invisible to the naked eye on account of their attenuation; while a clairvoyant medium who goes into a trance and describes spirits and things, is not a clairvoyant in reality, but simply an instrument in the hands of spirits or mortals, who can transmit information through his psychologized brain. Spirit-control is effected by processes directly analogous to those by aid of which a mesmerizer gets possession of his subject. Whenever a spirit out of the flesh or in the flesh has a positive opinion, it is of frequent occurrence that that idea is impressed on the sensitive's brain, and given off by him when in the entranced condition, as though it were revealed to him in vision. Magnetizers who have very powerful minds and bigoted ideas, can psychologize their subjects into describing anything they wish them to see, and thus the descriptions given in the somnambulist state are often unreliable; but when neither operator nor sensitive has any positive opinion on a given subject, and the entranced medium gives information on a certain topic, the information

must either be derived from invisible spirits or by the liberated soul of the sensitive taking cognizance in the magnetic state of things hidden from his view in his normal condition.

Baron Reichenbach's sensitives described od-force, and spoke of odylc flames playing around the hands of those who magnetized them. A great many experimentalists have denied the existence of this force because their sensitives have never beheld it; the truth of the matter is that some people overpower the senses of their patients by magnetic emanations, while others control them entirely by the power of will. The eye is the great window of the soul; the glance of a powerful psychologist is all that is needed to entrance a negative person, while the hand is the great gateway to the physical forces. From the points of the fingers animal magnetism proceeds most readily, while from the eye the soul, or mental power, is most readily exercised. A man or woman may be a first-rate magnetizer and yet no psychologist; but he or she cannot be a psychologist, or mesmerizer, without being a magnetist, because while magnetism, a physical force, is the lesser, it does not include will-ability, which is the greater; but will-power, the greater, whenever in operation, can command bodily forces to act as its allies and do its bidding. We have known many instances where operators and subjects, entirely in doubt on the matter of animal magnetism, have received startling proofs of its existence by having it described to them by sensitives in the somnambulist state. Dr. Phelps's allusion to a purple fluid is very suggestive and timely. All colors have a spiritual value and meaning. In the spirit world every shade and hue of color typifies an interior condition. Blue signifies and is the promoter of harmony, while red typifies and induces power. Thus purple—red and blue united—is produced by a harmonious organization, generating a force which equalizes the patient's condition, and also a power sufficiently strong to thrust out disease.

Animal magnetism, of course, has much narrower limits to its domain of usefulness than psychologic influence or spiritual power. As magnetism alone begins and ends with the body, it is not confined to man; the lower animals share it, and the dog is known to be, when in a healthy state, a very fine magnetic physician. This animal magnetism leaving the dog's body can soothe pain, induce sleep and repair waste in a human frame, without the animal being at all conscious that he is doing anything to aid in a person's recovery. Food, medicine, vapors, can all produce physical results, and yet no one claims that they are conscious agents. The very air you breathe and water you drink affect you, and yet you may be perfectly ignorant of the existence of oxygen or ozone, carbonic acid gas or animalcules.

Very true it is that when you are afraid of impurities you become far more their victim than when you think nothing about them. Quite true it is, also, that when you believe in a remedy, and expect to receive good, you receive far more rapidly than when you have no faith; but, notwithstanding all this, we are every one of us more or less powerfully operated upon by invisible forces whose existence we do not realize. Our subject to-day is the true gift of healing and how we may ALL exercise it. It would be unjust on our part, after giving our discourse such a title, if we did not endeavor to help you to a knowledge of how you may every one become helpful and successful magnetizers. We spoke of the transference of disease at the outset of our remarks to illustrate a principle, and that is that every state and condition of mind and body is communicable; that the garments we wear, the food we prepare for others to eat, the rooms we inhabit, the books and papers we handle, the very air we breathe, all are charged to a degree with our life; and as mental characteristics, as well as physical states, powerfully impress themselves wherever we go on all surrounding objects, we can be fountains of health or miasmatic pools in our journey through life. We have known of several persons who have derived the very greatest benefit simply by sitting in rooms usually occupied by healthy and moral people. The furniture has been instinct with healthful life, while many have been saddened and corrupted by entering the domiciles of those whose bodies were diseased and whose minds were impure.

It is very easy to try to console yourselves with the doctrine that everybody ought to be strong enough to resist temptation and sickness; perhaps they ought to be, and some day will be, but it requires no argument to prove that they are not all in so felicitous a condition to-day. The moderate drinker, setting a bad example by his limited indulgence of a depraved appetite, justifies himself oftentimes by declaring that he never gets intoxicated, and that others ought to be strong enough to resist temptation and stop where and when he stops; but, unfortunately for them and for society, hereditary tendencies frequently manifest their baneful power most unexpectedly, and even the church communion-cup has been known, when filled with strong Port wine, to develop a tendency to inebriation, just as a small piece of meat will call out all the ferocity of a tiger's cub who has been brought up in perfect docility on a strictly vegetarian diet. Our thoughts photograph themselves upon the astral atmosphere which is the great book of remembrance all Nature keeps; our states of mind and body will either taint or bless everything we touch and every place we visit; and thus the truly good and healthy person need not be an orator, writ-

er or manipulator in order to affect society. His influence will go with him wherever he goes, and many will be blessed, never to find out in this life, perchance, who their benefactor has been; but in a future state one of the intensest joys of your life will be to realize the good you did by faithfully obeying the laws of Nature even when you saw no outward result of your labors, and mourned over the limits to the circle of your usefulness.

Animal magnetism, we repeat, is not a panacea for every ill; it is not the *elixir vitæ* for which the Rosicrucians so long and ardently sought. This *elixir vitæ*, or universal panacea, is soul-power, which controls and utilizes everything beneath it. Animal magnetism, however, regarded merely in its physical relation, is a most valuable remedy, destined to take the place of opium, morphine, chloroform, ether, nitrous oxide gas, and indeed every sleeping draught, narcotic, stimulant and anæsthetic, as this emanation from the human body can produce every result attending the employment of these often dangerous agents. In surgical operations magnetism is invaluable. As a deadener of sensation many well-authenticated cases are on record, of the most difficult, and usually painful operations, having been performed on the most delicate and finely organized persons without their feeling the slightest pain; and not only can vital magnetism deaden feeling, and thus abolish pain, but by virtue of its highly strengthening and vitalizing properties it can prevent fever from setting in, and the distressing and dangerous exhaustion ordinarily resulting from surgical operations. In the most critical cases, where life has almost gone out, this essence of life can enter through the respiratory system, and do the work of well-masticated, digested, and thoroughly assimilated food, as magnetism is, after all, food in a vaporous form, and food converted into the very power of life by a healthy person. The child is often very philosophical when he asks his parent to take his medicine for him. Magnetizers frequently find that by taking into their own systems the food they wish their patients to eat they can, by magnetizing them after the food has digested, produce the desired effects in them which can only result from the introduction into them of the elements found nowhere but in those articles of food. As direct magnetic manipulation signifies imparting to another the very essence of physical life, in cases where the spirits are too exuberant, and men are suffering from high living and insufficient exercise, magnetizing is objectionable. Illness is often the result of over-feeding and under-working. Where it is produced from such causes the sick person may relieve himself, and benefit a sufferer, by becoming himself the manipulator. We must always remember that every force in na-

ture is good in itself, and that the perversion of good alone renders evil possible. Evil is discord; evil is the state of things out of their right places. We see every day how the very power of muscle and limb which criminals employ in the act of rapine and murder can be used in rescuing a drowning man, or saving families from destruction by fire. The animality of the human race is its great curse at this hour. To direct animal forces into proper channels so that they become healing instead of destructive powers, should be the great aim of every one who desires to excel in the greatest work of all, self-culture.

We have great sympathy with the skepticism of this day, in so far as it is not aggressive, willful and destructive. An honest skeptic is apt to be the noblest and most sensible person in one's circle of acquaintance. The man or woman who requires proof, who will not endorse anything blindly, is usually both entertaining and instructive. The skepticism of Germany is a simple and natural reaction from mediæval credulity; but the skeptical scientists of that mysterious and wonderfully gifted land have been among the foremost in the ranks of those who have striven to unite science and religion, and have paid an immense amount of attention to the psychological studies of the age. Faith grounded upon knowledge is enlightened confidence in a well-trying power, while credulity, or gullibility, is devoid of all intelligence, and simply accepts without cavil any foolish story which gratifies a morbid love of the marvelous. In the New Testament we are constantly reminded that Jesus said unto those whom he was instrumental in curing and reforming, "Thy faith hath made thee whole"—not my power but your faith. We are told that, at times, even this great healer could accomplish nothing on account of the unbelief of the populace, and that he was sometimes astonished at their incredulity. "He marveled because of their unbelief."

Now what is this peculiar something styled "faith," without which the Bible tells us we cannot please God. Faith, that is, true faith we mean, is of two kinds: The first kind of faith is much higher and more important in a moral sense than the second, though both are very necessary to round out the character and give completeness to life. The first kind of faith is a faith common to every honest person, and is entirely independent of belief in anything except the power due to the moral sense. We often say a man has kept faith with us, or, if he has not kept his word, that he has broken faith. Now this faith is integrity, honor, justice, straightforward honesty. To be faithful is to be true; to be unfaithful is to be false; and thus, to be without faith is to be a scoundrel. A man may have no true faith and yet believe

every one of the thirty-nine articles of religion printed in the prayer-book of the Episcopal Church, besides the three great creeds of Christendom; but belief in dogma, or in the truthfulness of an historical record, does not constitute necessary or "SAVING" faith. Ingersoll may be quite as faithful a man as the devoutest Theist, and yet utterly fail to intellectually apprehend the Deity; and yet he bows reverently before the altar of God in his own soul, and the Deity which there makes known his will to men is no stranger to many an atheist. Infidel is a horrid word, an opprobrious epithet, a name we should never think of giving to any unbeliever unless he gloried in it and wished to be called by a name to us suggestive of immorality rather than of heresy. To be infidel is to be untrue to one's trust; and this a great many materialists are not; and when we contemplate the work they are doing for the elevation of humanity without expecting any reward for it hereafter, we cannot help wishing that some of our friends who fervently believe in immortality, and expect to be rewarded for all their efforts in "the bright summer-land" and "the sweet by-and-by," would take pattern by their self-denying industry. But we suppose we shall be called to account for a digression if we linger over the pleasant work of enumerating the virtues of people who, though theoretically at variance with us on many points, are one with us in many of the greatest works of life.

The second kind of faith, which we have spoken of as inferior to the first, is not, like the first, inseparable from morality, but is rather the result of intellectual training, reflection, experience, and constitution. It is surprising to learn how much phrenological development, climatic influence, food and education have to do with belief. The faith to which we now allude is confidence in one's own powers and in the success of every laudable enterprise. We all know how very frequently it occurs that a highly gifted individual will fail in singing, speaking, painting, etc., through lack of confidence in his own abilities. In quite as many instances where people are trying to develop and exercise mesmeric, magnetic, or mediumistic powers with splendid natural abilities, with remarkable qualifications for becoming mediums and adepts, they even fail to reach mediocrity among the mesmerists and clairvoyants of the age. The grandest rule of life we can possibly lay down for our guidance is to encourage faith in the ultimate triumph of right, and in a Supreme Power of perfect love and wisdom; to discipline ourselves to follow conscience, come what may; to be indifferent to the smiles and frowns of our neighbors, and to go on steadily in the path of duty, satisfied with the approving smile of a satisfied conscience. In this spirit all the great thinkers and saviours of our

race have gone boldly forward to their victory.

The men and women whom you truly admire were heroes and heroines; they were not copyists or imitators of fashion, but original and independent thinkers and workers, who though while their works and words were attributed to the devil while they lived on earth, were acknowledged as messengers from God so soon as their spirits left the forms of clay and men came to see what great though unrecognized prophets had been among them. Socrates, quaffing the cup of hemlock in his prison cell; Jesus, dying on the cross on Calvary's summit; the Waldenses and Huguenots; the early Quakers; the early Universalists of the type of Murray; the early Unitarians of the school of Priestley; the Abolitionists made of the metal of Thompson and Garrison, were not men who waited to know if an idea or practice was fashionable before they endorsed it. To them, principle was everything, and fashion a mere pretty plaything for the amusement of people who had no sense of the stern reality of life, and considered it man's highest privilege to fritter away golden hours in pretty nothingnesses. The young man who will smoke his cigar and drink his glass of ale, even though his common sense and judgment advise him to abstain, makes himself appear weak and inferior, even in the eyes of the companions he is too cowardly to dissent from. If he be their inferior, then may he well bow to their decision and ape his superiors; but if he be the equal of his associates, why not have a will and course of action of his own?

The utter abandonment of truly great people is the secret of their power, and the successful psychologist who is to heal diseases and dispossess men of unclean spirits and bad habits must be like the most successful of all singers, who, forgetful of the audience and the applause, thrills the souls of her auditors by the perfect beauty of her inspired song. Her heart goes out in the words she sings; she is elevated far above the earth; memory, passion, ecstasy are all in her song. She is in a world of unseen being, and the stage and the footlights, the roar of applause, the costly flowers flung at her feet, are nowhere. While she has moved her vast audience to tears and stirred within them the holiest and strongest sentiments, their very existence is forgotten by her perhaps.

The very greatest of all effects is that produced by the artist, who, utterly indifferent to the world's opinion, is keenly alive to the sacredness of his vocation. Like some of the great preachers in history who have preached sermons costing them their lives, the truly great healer of humanity goes forth with the sword of truth to slay abuses, as well as with the healing salve for broken and bleeding hearts. Our subject rises as it proceeds, until from the ani-

mal magnetism which heals bodily suffering we soar to meet and utilize that tremendous power of soul which infinitely transcends in its might and mission everything earthly. It is indeed a treasure deposited in earthen vessels, but it is the power of God unto salvation; it is the spiritual energy which can say to the guilty woman, "Go, and sin no more," and transform the prostitute into the saint. It is fashionable to-day to doubt the miracles, to throw discredit upon all magical legends. Suppose the stories of Jesus and other great teachers are fables, and no one ever opened the eyes of the blind, made the deaf hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and the dead to arise from their graves; supposing magnetism has no existence, and handkerchiefs and aprons taken from apostolic bodies have no more healing virtue than any tattered rag, the spiritual side of the wonders remains. The power of the soul is incontestable. The great saviour is he who cannot only patch up the body and relieve the suffering incident to a broken limb or an infirmity of twelve years' standing, but he who can wield the mighty sword of spirituality, enlighten blinded spiritual eyes, and cause them to see their duties clearly, as they never saw them before; who can open the ears of the soul and mind and let in the sweet music of heaven till it charms the spirit from the alluring scenes of vice to a heaven of virtue.

If your son or daughter is wicked and sick, while you would give much to any one who would cure the body, would you not give far more to him who could change the character? Far be it from us to decry the blessed work of physical healing; but the casting out of devils, *i. e.*, the reformation of drunkards, licentiatees, thieves and murderers, the lifting of the weak and easily led into a position of power and usefulness where they can withstand the fiery darts of persecution and temptation, is, in our estimation, a far grander and more important work. In this work of moral healing we can all engage. Let us rest assured, then, when we can do the greater work we can always do the lesser. Those who can reach the soul, and touch the mind, can surely control the frame. This blessed power to heal is possessed by every one, young and old, rich and poor, learned and illiterate. While we cannot too highly eulogize collegiate instruction, or place too high an estimate upon a knowledge of anatomy and physiology, the true healer, we affirm, is he who with or without technical information goes about, doing good, wishing well to his fellow-beings, ever ready to aid them in their distress. The silent power of the spirit is often its strongest power, and while you may not always have opportunity to manipulate the suffering, nothing need ever prevent you from wishing them well and directing your thought toward their recov-

ery. In cases of drunkenness and insanity especially, the mind is often more at fault than the body. If by thoroughly subjecting another will to your own you can prevent crime, and convert insane persons into sane ones, how glorious the result of your efforts.

Food and clothing and general surroundings have of course great influence upon all of us; but the supreme power of the spirit can surmount every barrier, o'erleap every obstacle, and achieve a triumph greater than that of the most illustrious conqueror. Let us go to our respective homes to-day, resolved to heal the

minds and morals of our fellow beings; but let us never forget that we can never work truly for others until we have subjected our own lower natures to our higher. Time forbids us to dwell longer on this vast and important theme, but in our next discourse, on "The Restoration of the Devil," we hope to dwell somewhat on spiritual methods of healing the sick and insane. Our beautiful faith in a perfectly good God and the divinity of everything in nature, leads us without fear or hesitancy to assure you that in all your work for humanity, whatever else may fail, Love never faileth.

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THE RESTORATION OF THE DEVIL.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

Our theme on this occasion is a somewhat startling and unusual one. "Why Does Not God Kill the Devil?" you will remember furnished us with a topic for discourse early last winter, when we endeavored to convince you that God does not destroy evil by any direct exercise of sovereignty; but good in man being the Alpha and Omega of his existence, will eventually eradicate all imperfection and sin. The problem before us is hard to solve; the astutest thinkers, the most erudite scholars in all ages, have found the question of evil hard to deal with; but all along the line of the ages we can trace the footsteps of those greatest of all great philosophers, who, acknowledging the divinity of every atom in the universe, have beheld only temporal evil and eternal good.

The atomic theory of the universe, now almost universally accepted by scientists and scholars, leads us to the conclusion that every solid body is made up of a countless number of infinitesimal atoms, so minute that the ultimate indivisible atoms cannot be seen with the eye of man, or even clearly discerned by any scientific instruments yet invented by human ingenuity. Metaphysicians are always asserting their belief in the non-reality of disease and pain, and sometimes we are inclined to lightly dispose of their fanciful theories by calling to your remembrance the positive and proved facts connected with our daily life; but while all dogmatism is puerile, and while many would-be philosophers are foolish and bigoted in their advocacy of unproved negations, there is usually underneath every theory a rock of fact; and could we only remove the superficial accretions and reach the primal thought, ridicule would no longer be a weapon employed by us when at-

tacking the errors of our times. The power of the soul is undoubtedly the absolute power; matter is not intended by nature to be anything more than the servant of spirit. Intelligence is displayed everywhere in the universe of mind and matter. Because some men are blind, no proof is brought forward against the existence of color; because some men are deaf, the existence of sound is not disproved, neither can any of the blind and deaf materialistic assumptive fallacies of to-day shake the faith of the intelligent Theist in a God, almighty, all-wise, all-loving and all just. He that believes on evidence hath the witness in himself, and this living witness cannot be silenced by any external sophistries. Those who have experienced the peace and joy which flow from belief in a perfectly good God can never give up their knowledge of the existence of the fount of eternal goodness; for spiritual evidences convey knowledge to the soul and thence to the brain as certainly and conclusively as the reason and the bodily senses convince the intellect of the existence of material things.

When lecturing in New York last summer we spoke to a large audience, one Sunday evening, on the restoration of the Devil, and many of our friends expressed the hope that we would re-deliver our address and have it published. It is difficult to reproduce exactly any extempore production, but as ideas are as much more valuable than mere words, as men are of more account than their garments, we can readily give again the substance of our discourse. Though possibly some who heard us in New York and may read the report of this lecture will meet an old friend in a new dress, still as we recognize our friends independently of their cos-

tume, this discourse will no doubt be remembered by all who heard it in the summer and wish to hand it to their friends in printed form.

In alluding to the atomic theory, in expressing our faith in the essential goodness of every atom, and in referring you to the cardinal doctrine of our religion, the existence of one only perfectly wise and loving Deity, we simply paved the way for what is to come, and suggested to your minds certain causes for effects which must of necessity follow. Now if the atomic theory be true, and every atom in the universe be good, with an individuality of its own, evil can only be the result of atoms finding themselves in their wrong places; hence to induce every atom to quit another's place which it has usurped and fall quietly into its own, will be to destroy evil or restore the Devil to a condition of perfect innocence, purity, and obedience to the divine law. This work can be accomplished by human spirits both in and out of the material form, as they follow the higher instincts of their being and subdue the senses to the soul. The Grecian philosophers, in common with metaphysical thinkers and teachers of all ages, taught the doctrine of the preëxistence of the human soul. In glowing poetical and allegorical language they described the descent of the pure, innocent spirit of unfallen man from a world of celestial delights into the dark prison-house of the physical body. They regarded matter as impure, as the foe of the spirit, as something for the soul to vanquish, and thus they recommended the severe mortification of the body that the soul might the sooner be liberated from its thralldom to the senses. This idea is common to all Oriental philosophies; it is at the root of the penances, prayers, pilgrimages and sacrifices of the so-called Pagan, and also of the modernized Pagan, viz., the Christian world.

Almost every Christian dogma is derived from Oriental or classic philosophy. The astronomical myths reappear in the history of the Saviour Christ, and while we are not among those who deny the personality of Jesus, we behold in the stories told of him fragments of genuine biography dressed up in the stage costumes of the actors in the great astral drama of ancient Egypt. In this stupendous play the Devil always figures largely. He is Draco or Scorpio, the autumnal dragon or scorpion, of the skies, the zodiacal sign of the first autumn month, October. He heralds the reign of winter, with all its rains, and storms, and snows, and as the ancients were for the most part poorly clad, and inhabited houses which ill-protected them from the strife of the elements, it is not to be wondered that they imagined the wintry constellations to be the abodes of avenging powers who contended against their god, who dwelt in the sun, and who at midwinter

seemed to be dying as the days became shortest, until, on Dec. 25th, the first appreciable lengthening of the days occurs, and this day is thus appropriately dedicated in honor of the birth of a Saviour. And as the midsummer constellation, Virgo, reappears, and in proximity to her Bootes or Joseppe, it is not surprising that the incarnate God of Christendom should have his birthday fixed at this season, and that the virgin mother and foster father Joseph should figure so prominently in the representation of his nativity.

No superstition can be more readily accounted for than that of the belief in the Devil, so very natural was it for the ancients to attribute every phase of misunderstood phenomena to an adverse source. Temptations and trials are not usually acceptable to the unenlightened judgment of man; and yet, where is the sage who has profited by the discipline of sorrow, unwilling to thank the Eternal for pain as well as for pleasure, for disappointments as for fulfilled hopes? Sorrows develop sympathy; they unbosom our hearts to our fellow-men; they make us understand and love one another as we never could were we not fellow-sufferers. The power to suffer is the power to enjoy; the ability to do wrong itself enables us to do right; we cannot eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good without also partaking of the produce of the tree of the knowledge of evil. Children do not usually thank father and mother and teachers for the severity of the discipline to which they subject them, yet how often in after years does the grown-up child remember with deepest gratitude the parent's strictness, and with sorrowful regret the over-indulgence, which, while sweet as honey in the mouth, has proved bitter as gall and wormwood after it has left the palate. It needs growth in wisdom to enable us to appreciate sorrow, and so does it need wisdom to make us see that every convulsion of nature, be it earthquake, cyclone, volcanic eruption, storm or tempest, is absolutely necessary to play the prelude to the harmonious anthem yet to be sung by the choir of a completed universe. The Devil we dread is the embryonic blessing, whose benignity and beauty we are at a loss to perceive; the Satan, or adversary we fear and shrink away from, is only the shadow of an approaching angel, coming to greet us with costliest treasure in his hand. Our friends in the darkness cast their shadows before them, and we mistake them for approaching enemies; as in a masked ball, enemies and friends are so veiled and mixed that we are at a loss to know one from the other unless the gift of spiritual discernment enables us to penetrate within the veil, and by the subtle instinct of the soul detect the difference between the sphere of a loved one and that of one inimical to our welfare. The early dwellers on this planet were

like the earth itself, crude, chaotic, and in their crude state they attributed to a power of evil everything whose use they had not discovered.

In our controversies with Atheists we always remind them that if they do not believe in God they must of necessity acknowledge the existence of the Devil. The Materialist of to-day denies a personal Devil, but believes in an abstract one. Week after week in the columns of atheistic newspapers arguments are brought forward to prove that no Supreme Power of Love, Justice and Wisdom can exist controlling all things, else affairs would not be as they are. When President Garfield passed to the spirit-world, even so near a neighbor of ours as the *Boston Investigator* brought forward the untimeliness of his transition as proof against the existence of a good God. Now if there be a remorseless energy in nature, personal or impersonal, conscious or unconscious—call it by whatever name you will, law, force, destiny, fate, chance—which does not deal equitably with all men; if men and women are unjustly dealt with by a power which they cannot control, but which brings them into existence and persecutes them while it favors others, then this capricious, partial, unjust and unmerciful power is the Devil. George Chainey, the regular lecturer in Paine Hall, calls optimism a delusion, and is an out-and-out pessimist. No doubt he is soured in consequence of the hypocrisy he has beheld in the churches, and as a come-outer from them is as much opposed to all he can possibly designate "priestcraft" as he was formerly in favor of the ministerial profession to which he belonged. His honesty as a man we do not question, but his opinions on religious questions are only Calvinism run to seed.

Materialism is a reaction from Calvinism, of which it is a modified form. It is preferable to Calvinism in many respects, as it is far better to believe in no God than in a cruel and revengeful one; it is far pleasanter and healthier to deny man's immortality, than to preach the eternal felicity of an elect few and the everlasting misery of a large majority of human souls; but the failure of the materialist to behold the divine equity displayed everywhere, and to see even in every fiend an angel in embryo, is largely the result of early and inherited Calvinistic prejudice, which is only a system that personifies the blind, relentless force of nature believed in by the atheist. You are all too thoroughly familiar, probably, with Danté's "Paradiso, Purgatorio and Inferno," also with Milton's "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained," as well as with the "Heaven and Hell" of Emanuel Swedenborg. In all of these treatises you are introduced to fighting angels, and a perpetual conflict between angels and devils; according to these three noted authors evil is possessed of everlasting life. Danté's

visions are all highly colored with Roman Catholic theology, and though he was no doubt a remarkable seer, all that he saw he beheld through the stained glass of the Romish church; while Milton saw the scheme of salvation with the eyes of a Puritan, and Swedenborg never had in his earthly life all the Lutheran dust removed from his spiritual eyes. We do not deny to the visions of Danté a vivid reality; we do not question his seership, or imagine other than that he really beheld spirits in purgatorial pain, while others, whose lives on earth had been infamous, were writhing in the tortures of a hell of remorse; we do not deny that Swedenborg really saw the hells, or that in those infernal states he beheld spirits who showed no signs of amendment and no wish to advance; but to declare that these hells are to remain hells forever because they are such to-day, or were when these clairvoyants beheld them, is to argue as illogically as to declare that because you are now in this hall, and may be seen sitting here by a clairvoyant at a distance, you are to spend your eternity here sitting on settees listening to a lecture.

We behold in this world the remedial and reformatory properties of sorrow. As man advances in the scale of civilization he becomes more and more convinced that no punishment in this world is justifiable unless it serve one or both of the following ends: the reformation of the offender, and the protection of society. Thus the best minds of the age rule out capital punishment as inadmissible, and view with disgust all injuries inflicted upon prisoners in dungeons. The prisons of to-day are a disgrace to the world; so are hospitals and lunatic asylums for the most part, though in all these institutions recent improvements of so marked and revolutionary a nature have been made as to give promise of a really desirable and effective class of reformatory and curative institutions arising in our land in the near future. What shall we do with Guiteau? Ask the mob from the lowest slums which defile your cities, and with one voice they vociferously shout: "Why, hang him! what else would you do with him?" And yet these people, many of them, who are so clamorous that Guiteau should be hung, are themselves in mortal danger of ending their own earthly lives on the gallows. Ask the refined, pure-minded ladies or gentlemen of culture and good-nature, whose every taste is refined, whose every act is eminently exemplary, and what say they? "Oh, do not wrest from another the precious boon of life you cannot bestow! You do not know the temptations to which the poor, misguided man has been subjected. Reform him if you can, certainly prevent him from dyeing his hands again in human blood; take from him the unfettered liberty he has so terribly misused; but whatever you do,

better anything than that you should imitate him and commit a similar crime to his own, even though with greater provocation."

The tears of a mother, the mute pleading of the sorrow-stricken eyes of a heart-broken parent, have saved many a hardened sinner, while all the menaces of the law and threats of future damnation have failed to soften an obdurate heart. Love never faileth: it is infinitely powerful to rescue every spirit in all universes, and the sole agent employed by celestial beings when dealing with the unfortunate and the sinful. The most degraded specimens of humanity are ever the severest, the most unforgiving, while the pure and noble are like the Christ on the cross, who, pitying rather than blaming his murderers, cried to heaven for mercy on them in those memorable words: "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do." Of one thing we are assured: that no matter how many devils there may be in the universe to-day, they will not always remain devils. No matter from what arcadian heights of bliss they may have fallen; no matter in what depths of crime and woe they may now be plunged, within every one of them the spark of goodness smoulders; and that spark the discipline of pain will yet fan into a flame.

It is nonsensical to prate of a holy God who hates iniquity, and then endow him with infinite power and say that he cannot or will not save and redeem every soul he has created; it is infamous to attribute to God actions which we would never dare to attribute to any earthly potentate, however vicious. The blasphemy of materialism sinks into impressive insignificance when contrasted with the creed of Orthodoxy, whose leading articles are: an angry God, a bleeding Saviour, an almost almighty Devil, and an endless Hell for the great multitude of the human family. Wonder not at the atheism of the nineteenth century when you read the history of the ecclesiasticism of the preceding centuries, which was a dualism that gave to its evil side far more power than it ever attributed to its good. In the theology of the Evangelical churches we cannot find a single trait in the character of God the Father to admire or even to respect, while Jesus is certainly the most remarkably self-denying and virtuous character imaginable. No language can do justice to our admiration of a type of character so philanthropic as that of the Christian's Saviour when he voluntarily bore the Father's wrath to save humanity from degradation and eternal sorrow; but how wretched he must be if he is conscious that his work has been ineffectual to save the larger number of human souls from that Father's fierce displeasure. Jesus in the churches has been set up between God and man to hide the Father from his creatures, and thus we are, and always shall be, the sworn enemies of Christ-

olatri, while we deeply reverence and devoutly admire the hero of the Gospels; though according to the records themselves Jesus was neither impeccable nor infallible. If he was a demi-god or super-angelic personage, as the Arians of the fourth century believed him to be, then he did not need the discipline of earth, and all the courage and instruction to be gained from a contemplation of his life as simply a man is eliminated from his biography, and he becomes a farcical actor in the great drama of human experience.

The revision of the New Testament is still exciting considerable comment, though the new version has scarcely continued to create the furor anticipated when, shortly after its publication, more than one hundred thousand copies were sold in a few days. Before the summer vacation we called your attention to many striking alterations in the text, which we decidedly regard in the light of very marked improvements. The famous though oft disputed passage in the epistle of John, "For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," has been entirely erased. This was a terrible blow to many an uncultured believer in the doctrine of the Trinity, though all scholars had been for many years disposed to regard the passage in the light of an interpolation, as it was not to be found in any of the oldest manuscripts. We know that some of the early Fathers of the Church recommended "pious frauds" when they wished to establish a doctrine which they considered agreeable to "the Word of God," and if in that Word (the Bible) they could not find sufficient evidence in favor of the doctrine, they coined evidence by circulating marvelous tales and introducing into the sacred text their own commentaries upon it, until after-translators readily believed that there was no imposition in the matter, but that these marginal notes were really part and parcel of the original scriptures. It is quite unnecessary to remind so highly cultured a congregation as the one we are addressing, that original manuscripts are nowhere to be found. Present translations from pretended "originals" are made by a diligent comparison of the three most ancient documents discoverable, but these are respectively three hundred and four hundred years younger than they ought to be to be originals. We refer to the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts, dating back only to the fourth, and the Alexandrian manuscript only to the fifth century. These remarks on the revision of the Testament are only introductory to a peculiar kind of restoration of the Devil, to which we now desire to invite your attention, and that is the restoration of the Devil in the *Pater Noster* or Lord's Prayer.

For many centuries Christians of every name

have believed that they were using the exact words of Jesus when they prayed daily to be delivered from evil. Evil is so comprehensive and convenient a term, and so easily understood, every one moreover being ready to acknowledge the prevalence of evil, and all pure-minded people so anxious to be saved from it, that Christendom has always been united in its prayer for deliverance from evil; but behold the revised Lord's Prayer! It acknowledges the existence of the Devil, and all who adopt the revision must pray to be delivered from the evil one, that is, from his Satanic Majesty, the prince of the powers of darkness. To us it is a matter of indifference as to whether this translation is correct or incorrect; we do not by any means believe in the plenary inspiration of the frequently altered New Testament, neither do we regard any man as infallible, or bow to him as to a supreme Lord and Master; but to the conservative Christian this change is fraught with stupendous consequences. To Christians of the school of Prof. Austin Phelps of Andover, who is very anxious to "resuscitate" the Devil, his resurrection into the *Pater Noster* is no doubt a very encouraging sign of our times, as, without an arch-fiend, followed by a long train of imps, they cannot successfully wage war against Spiritualism, which, unfortunately for 'all materialistic theories invented to explain it away, possesses intelligence; but what can the Universalist and conservative Unitarians do with this restored Devil? Certainly the revision committee did right in substituting the clause, "deliver us from the Evil One" for "deliver us from evil," as the weight of evidence is in favor of the theory that Jesus taught the existence of a personal Devil and of many unclean demons, and told his disciples to pray to be delivered from the Evil One.

Now the reformed Christians to whom we have just alluded prove all they affirm by reference to the Bible; and the Universalists particularly call Jesus their Lord and Master, even their Saviour and Redeemer. If he be the infallible Son of God, even though not God the Son, if the New Testament be his inspired word, how can they escape condemnation if they refuse to believe in the Devil and pray to be delivered from him? No one reading the New Testament can possibly escape the conclusion that Jesus not only refrained from denying the existence of Satan, but continually spoke of him as having a real existence, and as being constantly on the alert to entrap the souls of men. "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven"; "Ye are of your father, the Devil," and a host of other almost equally strong passages, prove conclusively that unless the New Testament is a forgery or an allegory, Jesus believed in the Devil. If it be a forgery, no documents extant prove at all conclusively

the existence of Jesus; and as to his teachings, we can know nothing of them; if it be an allegory, then Jesus and the apostles were either, according to the celebrated French author, Dupuis, the sun and the twelve signs of the zodiac, or, according to Mr. James Burns, the editor of the London *Medium and Daybreak*, the human soul and the twelve powers of the mind. These fanciful and poetical interpretations may answer very well for skeptics and Spiritualists. The skeptic may agree with Dupuis, that Christianity is only solar worship in a new dress; the mystic, the Spiritualist, and those Swedenborgians who push the doctrine of correspondence to its utmost limit, may contemplate with delight the New Testament as a beautiful allegory, and be quite content; content to see Christ in their own souls and his twelve apostles in the twelve powers of their own minds, while all the physical desires and functions are either a crowd of disciples, or a host of enemies, as they are obedient or disobedient to the commands of the spirit.

Spiritualizing ancient histories is a very pleasant task, and taking into consideration the customs of Orientals, it is not at all improbable that allegory and parable constitute the largest part of all Eastern scriptures; but the Universalists of the West will have none of this poetry; to them Jesus was not only a real, but an infallible personage; he could not be mistaken, according to the *Christian Leader*, the Universalist organ published in this city. A Unitarian church in England is hardly worth supporting, because the Rev. Charles Voysey, who criticises the character and conduct of Jesus about as we do, preached within its walls. This newspaper, which wishes to be the *leader* of Christian thought in the world, objected to Mr. Voysey because he spoke of Jesus so "spitefully"; and yet there is probably no man in the world who has said more in favor of the stainless moral character of the Nazarene than this same "spiteful" Theist, who preaches every Sunday to one of the most refined and intelligent congregations of liberal religionists in the British Metropolis.

What is to be done with this terrible *bête noir*, the Devil, who will not be expunged from Christian theology, and who will maintain that Jesus recognized him and turned his colleagues out of the bodies of men into a herd of swine? Spiritualism alone can find the key to the real devils; they are unprogressed human spirits, but not one of them is irrevocably lost to goodness; for within each a germ of divinity is discoverable. Milton, founding his poem upon the enigmatical saying of the great teacher, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," and also upon the apocalyptic account of "war in heaven," describes in the imagery common to poets the constant struggle between

spirit and matter, and the descent of the spirit from pristine innocence and ignorance into a vortex of contending emotions. On the one hand is the divine soul and legions of angels, all good companions and wise advisers luring the human spirit to celestial bliss; on the other, sensual desires, troops of undeveloped spirits and all bad companions tempting the expanding intelligence of the rational mind to sacrifice principle for what the world calls pleasure, and to barter virtue for sordid dust. This conflict develops character; without it we should be spiritual babes with the innocence of babyhood, but forever without the wisdom of maturer years. Responsibility, the power of choice, is the prerogative and attribute of man, the result of his self-conscious entity, his intelligence. Without it he would be merely a beautiful piece of mechanism, having no possible merit or demerit as an intelligent creature.

The grandeur of character is impossible to be obtained without struggle. Let us rest assured that no spirit, however fallen, is hopelessly lost, but that every soul in the universe will, after its passage through all needful discipline, be elevated to its true position of true spiritual manhood. The devil after all is not so black as churchmen have painted him. The Satan of the book of Job is only the accusing angel believed in by the Jews; an unpopular being with those whose characters would not bear inspection, just as a detective is not highly esteemed by a gang of evil-doers; but this Satan in the book of Job was never known to tell a lie. He tells God that Job ought not to be allowed to receive a reward due to merit unless he deserves it. His powers of endurance ought to be put to the test ere he is classed with the world's true saints. The Devil wishes to test the piety of Job. He does so; he afflicts him; and after he has endured grievous sorrow, he is a wealthier and happier man than he ever was before; thus Satan turned out to be the best friend this notable servant of God ever had.

The Devil of Christendom is not only very respectable but very intelligent. To his Satanic Majesty have been attributed the marvelous spiritual power of Jesus to cure men's minds and bodies of insanity and sickness, besides every progressive idea, every scientific discovery, and all the blessedness of real communion with the unseen world. The Devil discovered Amer-

ica, invented the steam engine, the printing press and a host of other aids to civilization. He gave a new impetus to the science of astronomy, he discovered astronomical facts and he only, according to the church of bygone centuries. Luther and he were bosom friends, intimate chums, one never being mentioned without the other in Europe during the sixteenth century, even though, according to tradition, Luther once got angry with his friend and threw his ink-pot at him.

Let us meet this theological scarecrow face to face, and we shall find that he originated in days of human ignorance and fear, and that in after days he has been set up at the entrance to every rich harvest land, that the flock of birds known as the public may be frightened from plucking a single golden ear of that corn which an arrogant and selfish priesthood wishes to reap, and reserve entirely for its own use. Fear the Devil no longer, but rather fear your own unbridled lusts and passions; fear rather to disobey the beautiful laws of being, for if you are true to yourselves, to your highest conception of duty, evil spirits and evil men will have not the slightest power to triumph over you. When dark and unhappy spirits approach, even when vicious ones draw nigh, your atmosphere of moral purity will repel where it cannot enlighten them.

Let us all resolve—instead of seeking to carry men back to old world superstitions, to the restoration of belief in the Devil—to reform the Devil, if there be one; and certainly we may aid unhappy, earth-bound spirits to rise from their degradation by doing all we possibly can to relieve distress and correct wrong in our own vicinity.

Do not seek to summon undeveloped spirits from invisible realms that you may reform them, but rather remember that they dwell amid the haunts of crime on earth, and that as you reclaim the sinner you help up the unclean demons who surround him. Go forth nobly to your daily tasks; rely upon the Infinite and Eternal Power of Goodness; go forth, clad in the armor of truth and purity, to do battle with all the vices of the age, and in the angelic sense you may all "restore the devil" to purity; and in that new paradise into which all souls enter who have fought the battle of life the wisdom of the serpent will be found conjoined with the purity and harmlessness of the dove.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF GRATITUDE.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."—*Psalms* ciii: 2.

Ever since the Constitution of the United States, Thanksgiving Day has been a red-letter day in the New England calendar. Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday, and all other Christian festivals made much of by Catholics and Episcopalians, were utterly ignored by the Puritans; and the early settlers in these States, as you are aware, were men of the Cromwellian stamp; men and women also who had fled from the countries of the old world to the new that they might find freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, no man daring to make them afraid. A very natural, though not altogether wise reaction from the superstitions of Rome, led Martin Luther and his followers to deny very much that is true in Roman Catholic theology, while, unfortunately, with strangely perverse pertinacity the minds of the sixteenth century reformers clung tenaciously to many of the most frightful doctrines which Christianity had imported from Heathendom. By the word heathen we do not mean any person who is not a Christian, but rather one who is savage, barbaric, low in the scale of human development. The very injudicious and unjust uses of the words heathen and pagan, unfortunately still common among us, are at bitter enmity with that true spirit of love to all men which teaches us to behold a friend and brother in a black man as readily as in one whose skin is white as the lily's petals.

Thanksgiving Day, as we have already observed, is the great festival of the year among those New Englanders who claim kinship with the passengers of the Mayflower. It is almost their only festival, as in their horror of idolatry

they thought it necessary to refrain from commemorating at certain stated periods the birth, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; events now commemorated annually by millions of Protestants, whose faith in the real events is wondrously smaller than that of their ancestors who forbade the celebration. Certain festivals will always survive changes in theological opinion, because they are the feast days appointed by Nature, and not originally by the Church. Christmas is a natural festival common to all the ancients. Christmas Day was a day of rejoicing in the land of Egypt five thousand years ago; and why? Not because Jesus was born on that day, for tradition tells us he was not born till three thousand years later, but because darkness began to give place to light; on that day in the physical world every year, the sun arose from its wintry prison and faintly in its increasing strength foreshadowed the return of summer. Easter is the festival of spring-time; the resurrection of flowers and birds and long warm days; while Whitsunday, coming at the very commencement of the actual summer quarter, is fittingly regarded as the anniversary of great spiritual outpourings.

It is not our purpose this morning to treat you to an essay on the origin of the fasts and festivals of the Christian calendar, but rather to follow out briefly a train of thought started by the Governor's proclamation, advising all men in the State of Massachusetts to set apart this day as one of special gratitude to God for the manifold blessings we are constantly receiving from him. It may be objected by some that America is an entirely free country, and that here no religion is established by law as in Eng-

land and elsewhere, and thus it is out of place for the Governor of any State in the American Union to appoint a day for religious exercises. The feelings of a majority, never those of a minority, of citizens will rule in such a matter as this, and so long as the great mass of the people believe in a God and in some kind of religion they will persist in recognizing God and religion in their free actions; and so long as Presidents or Governors content themselves with simply recommending, without striving to enforce religious ceremonial, even the stoutest Atheist has no just ground for protest.

The exemption of church property from taxation is an injustice, because such exemption levies a tax for the support of churches on those who do not want them, as well as on those who build and use them; and against this injustice your late respected President manfully protested, even though a professing Christian himself. But the appointment of Thanksgiving Day is very like the appointment of any other public holiday; it means a cessation of the wearing labors of all ordinary days, an opportunity for rest and recreation, a time to enjoy the beauties of nature and art, a time to gather the family and friends of the family around the old family board, and there cement yet more closely all the ties which bind us each to each. Thanksgiving Day exercises a sweet, refining influence over our social life; and gladly indeed do we welcome anything and everything that helps men and women to live more nearly in accordance with the Golden Rule.

In this age of skeptical unrest many persons are almost afraid of avowing any belief in God at all; so hideously has the character of God been caricatured, that many persons have been frightened away altogether from every kind of acknowledgment of a Supreme Being, and yet, as Theodore Parker was wont to believe and say, it is very difficult to find any one who is really an Atheist in the broad and full sense of that term. Agnostics are no doubt to be found in this congregation to-day. Even among those who attend our services regularly, there are presumably a few, at least, who are disposed to treat the existence of God as an unsolved problem, and to regard man's future conscious being after death as an algebraic x , or unknown quantity. Many there are who in sunshiny hours of prosperity can live without a knowledge of God and without a hope for life beyond the grave, and yet feel no aching void in their hearts. So completely absorbed are they in the duties and pleasures of the present life that their motto is very appropriately, "one world at a time is enough for us;" but when the cold winds of adversity blow upon their earthly pleasures; when, sated with what the world calls pleasure, they turn in weariness and disgust from the lighted ball-room with its gay

crowd of dancers; when, wending their way to the bleak cemetery, they can show you a stone placed over all that they held dear, and weeping tears of bitterest anguish over the removal of their all to the silent land, they see no ray of hope guiding them to the world where their dear ones live forever; when in the midst of their sorrow the consolations of religion are all spurned by a heart and mind that cannot accept the old and has never learned the beauties of the new faith; in such an hour and amid such scenes we realize how deeply necessary to our happiness are those consolations which spring from affections set on things above, and from a firm faith in an Eternal Power of Infinite goodness who cares for each of his children, and implants no craving in the human heart which will not somewhere and at some time be satisfied. Then does Materialism retire into the shade of a soulless superstition, and the realities of the spiritual world appear more and more demonstrable even to human reason.

Though undoubting and uncompromising Theists, we also claim to be out-and-out Rationalists; any doctrine repugnant to reason we reject; any theories irreconcilable with positive scientific or other knowledge we at once discard, deeming a theory utterly unworthy of discussion if it be in opposition to a proved fact. We can never too highly eulogize a thorough training of the intellect; to undervalue literature and exact methods of scientific culture is to underrate the most powerful weapons ever placed in the hands of humanity, by the use of which truth can conquer falsehood, and virtue overcome vice. A study of Anthropology we recommend to every man, woman and child, and to this study of man himself we would advise such additional studies as astronomical, geological, botanical and the like; but far from imagining that cultivating the mind means stunting the affections, we sincerely maintain that all the exact sciences have a tendency to foster and develop the finest, the tenderest and most religious emotions possible to the human breast.

Many of our most religious and tender-hearted men and women have been foremost in the ranks of the world's greatest scholars. The present flow of the tide of Materialism is incidental to the ebb of the tide of Orthodox belief, and in no sense augurs the destruction of faith in God; it rather points to the downfall of faith in everything except God, and predicts the return of the human soul to the primitive simplicity of the religion of the truly spiritual, as it existed among our far back ancestors, whose mode of living was so remarkably natural that they were in living contact with the unseen world, in a full and conscious sense entirely unknown to the dwellers among the manifold artificialities of our modern civilization. We know that

all allusions to the purity and eminence of very ancient peoples will be looked upon with suspicion by many whose detestation of Orthodoxy is so unreasoning that they see in every allusion to past attainments a vestige of the old doctrine of the fall of man.

All who are even slightly familiar with our utterances, will long since have perceived that we are, in a spiritual sense certainly, evolutionists and not retrogressionists. We unhesitatingly affirm that the world is constantly growing better instead of worse, and that never in the history of man was the earth so advanced and its inhabitants so civilized as now; but notwithstanding all these admissions we so gladly make on the side of optimism and the evolution theory, we as strongly and persistently maintain that in very early ages there were a few men and women who were divinely illuminated, specially inspired; and this in no supernatural, but in a wholly natural way. They were the few "chosen" ones of past ages; chosen out of the many who were "called" on account of the extreme purity of their morals, and the simplicity with which they obeyed the laws of nature. Such as these were the founders of all the great religious systems of the world, all of which in their inception were pure and beautiful. Ages of tyranny and time-serving failed to eclipse the beauty of the ideas of those early sages and seers, whose inspired conceptions of life here and hereafter can hardly be transcended by the most gifted prophets of to-day.

The ancients declared that the earth rested upon a tortoise, and the tortoise upon the egg; and when inquiring minds asked what supported the egg, the priests became angry and vouchsafed no reply other than this, that it was blasphemous to peer with curious eyes into the hidden mysteries of the divine government. Some such answer is usually given to inquirers to-day, both by Oriental and Occidental slaves to beliefs which are not founded upon evidence. What underlies many a myth is nowhere discoverable. The story rests upon nothingness; it may have a tortoise and egg to back it up, but the mystery of the resting-place of the egg is still the unsolved problem. Not only is this true of the dogmas of ecclesiasticism, it is quite as true of the negative assumptions of Materialism. We were very politely informed by quite an intelligent gentleman the other day, that no one would believe in God or immortality unless he had been educated in such beliefs. He cited many instances to show that ancestors, climate and early training have all very much to do with a person's belief or unbelief in certain doctrines; for instance, he cited the fact of Brahmanism, Buddhism and Parseeism being systems of religion indigenous in Asia: they are stationary rather than migratory systems.

Born and reared in India and Persia, they find little or no favor in European or American countries, while Judaism has never become the religion of China, or Christianity the religion of Japan; and yet missionary enterprises have not lacked in energy and zeal, and Jews have sojourned everywhere. But very few Orientals have ever been converted to either one or other of these nominally Catholic religions, while the Ethnic religions of the Old World are usually utterly incomprehensible to Englishmen and Americans; very few Jews are converted to the Christian faith, and scarcely any Christians become converts to Judaism.

This argument was only one out of many which our atheistic friend brought forward to support his assumption that education and ancestral influence have so much to do with faith in spiritual things, that were it not for these influences and agencies every one would be an infidel. True it is that a very large majority of our children learn from the Bible, the church, the Sunday-school teacher and their parents, to place reliance on certain beliefs, and to reject antagonizing theories; but be this as it may, the great question of the origin of man's faith in God and a future life remains entirely unanswered; for if priests and books and ecclesiastical organizations have taught you and your ancestors to believe in God and immortality, whence came the primal thought? What lies behind ecclesiasticism? How did men ever come to believe in that which has no existence? True it is the Copernican system of astronomy has displaced the Ptolemaic theory; but this theory of the universe is only the result of wider study and more extended discoveries. The ancients never believed in a flat earth until an earth of some kind existed and revealed the fact of its actual existence to their minds and senses. Ordinary untutored common sense led them to infer that the earth on which they dwelt was flat, and they continued to believe that it was flat until some great mind, endowed with more than common sense, discovered that it was a sphere. No one ever believed that the sun revolved around the earth until a sun existed and gave light to the earth, thereby revealing itself as a reality. Appearances lead us to infer that the sun moves and that the earth is stationary; that it really rises in the east and sets in the west, and it requires uncommon sense and means of acquiring knowledge to lead men to believe that the earth moves around the sun, and that our turning away from the sun is the cause of night and winter.

We have merely drawn these illustrations to make plain our answer to those who claim that modern science goes far to disprove the existence of God and of a future conscious life for man. The physical sciences simply do not act-

ually reveal spiritual realities, but they one and all lead us to a point where we are confronted with design and intelligence, far more infinite than the intelligence and skill required to build a world and people it as Moses says in the letter of the Pentateuch God built the world and created its inhabitants. Modern science only leads us to the God of Theism, to the God of enlightened Spiritualism—a God infinitely wise and just, who is always working through the immutable laws of the universe, instead of acting occasionally and spasmodically from without upon his creation. The tendency of modern thought is toward a Deity all-pervading and unchangeable; a God who is far too wise to change any of his laws, as the results of infinite wisdom cannot be improved upon. Our conceptions of God become brighter and purer with our moral and intellectual growth, and thus Ingersoll has some ground for his motto: "An honest God is the noblest work of man." But could he only see deeper, were he only less hasty and more philosophical in his treatment of Theism, he would have exclaimed: "An honest view of God is impossible without a development of the moral sense."

The existence of a superior power to man is everywhere evident; but the ideas man will have of this superior power are regulated entirely by his moral development. The early Saxons, worshipping Woden and Thor, and other revengeful deities, did not ascribe to their gods attributes which they deemed unworthy of the best men; they rather ascribed to their deities those attributes they most admired when displayed in the lives of some of their own countrymen. The Jews attributing warlike tendencies to Jehovah, believed warfare to be glorious; the Romans, believing virtue and courage in battle to be synonymous, represented Jupiter, Mars, and others of their deities as warlike beings. In the Latin language the word *virtus* (virtue) literally means courage; in all the classics this word is used in this sense almost exclusively. As man progresses he begins to detest strife, and makes efforts to secure peace between all the nations of the earth. The desire of the world at this hour is rather to settle differences by arbitration than at the point of the sword, and efforts are everywhere being made to establish a confraternity of nations. Men are now beginning to see that dueling is inconsistent with intelligence and morals; that wars entered upon to gratify ambition should be regarded as wholesale murders. With these milder and better views of life; with these pure conceptions of what we owe to each other; in fine, with this ampler development of the finer feelings in the human race, we reject with indignation gods of wrath and cruelty, and look anxiously for the day when love alone shall be worshipped as the Supreme Power in the universe.

Modern science and all historical researches, instead of causing us to drift further and further away from a belief in God, are only drawing us surely, even if slowly, to a realizing sense of God. For the first time in our experience, God literally signifies The Good One; and certainly the God of Calvinism is so far from good that one would rather believe in the non-existence of a Supreme Intelligence than in the existence of so terrible and unjust a being. It is rather through geological and historical study that we are led to a firm faith in a pure Monotheism than through any special veneration we feel for certain presumably inspired records. To us human Bibles are of insignificant worth when contrasted with the great Bible of Nature. Through Anthropology rather than theology do we enter as through an open gate into the realm where God reveals himself to men. The law long sought without is only to be found within; the human mind itself is to be the revealer of divine secrets in the future, and no matter what suspicion may exist concerning the inspiration of written scriptures, though every table of stone miraculously covered with spirit-writing be broken, lost, or pronounced a fraud; though a fire greater than the conflagration which reduced to ashes all the contents of the celebrated Alexandrian library burn up every volume which the hand of man has ever written, aided or unaided by inspiration, the great Bible of Nature will remain; the primal fount of wisdom can never be dried up, and Keble will be proved right when he sings:

"There is a book who runs may read,
Which light and truth impart;
And all the lore its scholars need,
Pure eyes and honest hearts."

We have purposely amended the original in the last line, substituting the word "honest" for "Christian," as in these days it is simply intolerable to speak as though all virtue was confined to Christians, as we every one of us must know that the excellencies of character so long spoken of as Christian graces are the common property of honest seekers after truth in every age and clime. We no longer, it is true, trace all the events of life to the divine interposition, as the forefathers did, but this modern recognition of God in everything is far more intense than the former view of God which made him only an outside operator, controlling Nature spasmodically.

To us the progress of events is a manifestation of the incessant working of Divine Goodness; to us God is the life of every life, the centre and soul of every sphere, and in our acknowledgment of God as the giver of all good we look toward an infinite fount of perfect goodness whence streams of goodness only are constantly flowing to all souls in the universe.

True it is that the discipline of life is often vague and mysterious; we are utterly at a loss frequently to know why we are tried and tempted, and seemingly punished when we think we deserve it not. No doctrine is more atrocious and destructive of morality than that which leads you to infer that God punishes you through your children, wronging them that you may suffer for your misdeeds. True it is that mental as well as physical defects and ailments are handed down from parent to children, even beyond third and fourth generations, so that if this life were the only life justice would exist nowhere in nature; but if, with the eye of the soul, assisted by the concurrent testimony of multitudes of spirits, all declaring that their earthly sufferings alone enabled them to realize the exquisite pleasure which is now their abiding portion, we can look forward into our own future with the eye of that intelligent faith that is based on positive knowledge, and see the blessed results of our immediate trials, we shall then be able and ready to endorse the inspired theory of the greatest philosophers and true Spiritualists of every age and clime, and behold in our light affliction, which, comparatively speaking, is but for a moment, the egg of the bird of eternal happiness.

This nation has been afflicted. Garfield was an innocent sufferer, and some utterances concerning the cause of his death have led people to infer that God scourged this land because of its sins by removing the people's chosen and justly honored representative; but unless we look deep down below the surface of thought, we shall endorse a conception of God's dealing with men utterly destructive of all morality if we reason in this way. Would it be fair and just on the part of the Infinite to punish an innocent man that he might correct a guilty nation? Certainly not, unless a twofold object could be met. Nature is a great economist; she wastes nothing; she conserves and puts to the very best possible use every spark of her energy. Tennyson is undoubtedly correct when he says that nothing walks with aimless feet; that not even a worm is cloven in vain. This is no doubt the best possible world in the best possible universe, as some of our enthusiastic optimist friends are wont to say; and if this be a true statement concerning this world, with all its misery, shame and cruelty, as well as with its beauty, kindness and justice, we cannot fail to perceive that the removal of Garfield was the result of many necessities both national and individual: and that the angel of the earth, the wise guardian of the wounded man, the ascended heroes of this land, and indeed all the company of heaven, allowed the bullet of Guiteau to pierce the President's side and ultimately remove him from the form of clay, that the people might learn what they

needed to be taught, and that their representative might be free to carry on a higher and broader work than he could accomplish on earth. Since his transition he has communicated several times, has delivered two discourses through the mediumship of Mrs. Richmond in Chicago, and on all occasions has been emphatic in his enunciation of the inspiring and consolatory truth that he has in every way been blessed by the change, and that he at this hour is able to do far more for the American people as a spirit than he could as a mortal.

On a day like this, when families are accustomed to assemble round the family board and review the past as well as anticipate the future, many eyes will tearfully wander to vacant seats once filled by dearly loved ones, and the heart of the mourner cannot always say, "For our bereavements as well as for our joys we thank thee, oh! Father, Lord of heaven and earth"; but if the soul in its distress can only hearken to the unanimous voice of the happiest and holiest souls who inspire you from celestial spheres, they will be heard to sing in loudest and clearest refrain, "We praise thee, oh, our Father, for the blessing of pain"; for as gold is tried by fire, as every precious metal needs the consuming flame to separate it from all alloy and to bring out into burnished brightness its intrinsic beauty, so does every human spirit need that discipline of sorrow that opens up in the heart the otherwise closed chambers where in the deepest and tenderest emotions of nature dwell.

Count up your blessings, contrast your lot with that of others, and we are convinced that there is no person within sound of our voice this morning who will not be able to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits." No matter what your religious opinions may be; your religious instincts, older by far among men than any possible church or book, will compel you to acknowledge that yours is a favored lot. And yet how beautiful the thought that God is impartial, and that what we enjoy, or are to enjoy, is one day to be shared by every spirit in the universe, his Satanic Majesty included, if such a being exists.

Prayer is the natural voice of a heart in distress, the pleading of a supplicant asking for mercy, or craving some needed boon. Children come into the world praying; their first sounds are cries, their earliest words are requests for food, or toys, or something to supply their wants. It is only as they develop the higher parts of their natures, the more interior, that they display any sign of gratitude. Praise is always higher than prayer, as praise is the grateful acknowledgment of a full heart brimming over with gratitude for favors received. All true prayer is as natural to man as it is for him to breathe; true prayer cannot be sup-

pressed any more than the involuntary ejaculation, the result of sudden and intense pleasure or pain; prayer is not a duty—it is the natural result of an intense desire. Angels may look over a large congregation, and see the lips of hundreds mechanically moving as they utter words of prayer, but this company of spirits will hear no sound, and see no form; but let one earnest heart sincerely desire a blessing for another, this unselfish petition in angel eyes assumes form, it possesses speech, it is celestial music, and in the spiritual atmosphere is like unto a lovely flower, that not only exhales delicious perfume on the breeze, but also pours forth its heart in song, and is at once a fountain of beauty, fragrance and melody.

The devotee kneeling at the shrine of the Madonna in some Catholic cathedral may repeat Ave Maria fifty times, and the monotony of the utterance is tiresome and meaningless to the bystander; but in these words a full heart is unburdening itself of its gladness or woe; the soul's sincere desire is venting itself in the stereotyped phraseology of the church; but the thought of the heart is altogether beyond and utterly independent of expression; and as the kind and loving spirits who gladly respond to the heart's deep need listen to those petitions, they positively know not whether the words are addressed to Jesus, to his mother, to the saints, or to the great Unknown; to them the thought is everything, the words are nothing. Words are at best paltry mediums for the expression of soul-feeling; words are at all times inadequate to embody the deep feelings of the heart, whether of love or joy or sorrow. On ordinary occasions words are plentiful; but are there not times in every life when speech is impossible because the feelings of the soul are so very far beyond the possibilities of expression? In such hours as these wordless prayers ascend unto the Infinite as anthems of transcendent sweetness. The spirit has a language of its own, intelligible to spirit, as the birds have means of communion with each other, and you cannot understand them. This language of the soul is prayer or praise; it surpasses speech, and reaches out into the vistas of eternity freighted with power sufficient to revolutionize a spiritual condition; words may remain unanswered, but the plea of the soul ever receives a response. Thus not one prayer is ever offered in vain, while you may say your prayers to eternity and talk into the air.

However precious prayer may be, gratitude is always beyond it, as words of prayer are to be found in every language, while words expressive of thankfulness are entirely unknown to the tongues of the most barbaric people. Those of you who are fathers and mothers know how much sweeter to you it is when your child comes to you with beaming countenance and

speaks only to thank you for your kindness. This exercise fills your heart with exceeding joy, and blesses your little one infinitely more than he can be blessed by asking for a favor, however ready you may be to grant it. If we could all resolve to spend a few hours of our time in every week dwelling upon our blessings, this exercise would be a radical cure for every mental and physical ailment. Persons to be well must eat their food with gladness and thankfulness of heart; indigestion, dyspepsia, liver complaints and a host of common and very distressing ailments proceed directly from a complaining disposition. A cheerful heart and joyful countenance are the best physicians, and constitute the most effectual medicines possible to procure. It is positively a sin to talk about unpleasant things at the dinner table; it is both murderous and suicidal, as when the temper is morose and the mind disturbed, the very best food is transformed into poison. Cheerfulness and thankfulness will do much to save you from all epidemics, both moral and physical, and give you wondrous power over the sick and insane. Thousands of people are suffering to-day from the results of their own dissatisfied state of mind, and they attribute their disorders to adulterated food and to the impurities in unfiltered water. No one can be more earnest than ourselves in advocating perfect cleanliness and purity of body, food, drink and surroundings, so far as it is possible to procure them; but we are always ready to add, with all external cleanliness and internal impurity, you may be in a far worse plight than you would be if your surroundings were miserable and your food bad; if you carried about with you the true elixir of life, the universal panacea for all ills—a virtuous and cheerful heart.

This contentment with ourselves and our environment is not of course the false contentment of the idler who is satisfied with squalor and ignorance. Enlightened contentment grows only out of a knowledge that we have done our best; a sense of having done our utmost to obey the laws of life. But when circumstances have gone against us and we have failed in the eyes of men after all our efforts, resignation to the inevitable is the better part of valor, and a firm faith that all things are working for the best, the essence of the highest philosophy.

Our time is exhausted, and thus we must leave almost the greater part of what we had wished to say for a future occasion; but our closing word must not be omitted, and that is, remember that to be happy we must rather seek to confer pleasure than to grasp it for ourselves. The search for happiness is natural to man; man is destined to be happy; but the true happiness of every really happy spirit is a response to the happiness bestowed upon another. Carry this

thought into your families, and wherever you go seek to make others blest. Life will then be to you a succession of joyful surprises. Demand nothing, and everything you receive will be a pleasant surprise; demand everything, and no matter how much is given you, less than

everything will leave you discontented. This truth carried into all the relations of life will transform earth into a paradise, and bring about a golden age in which life on earth will be a reflex of the perfect dual, unselfish life of angelic states.

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THE TARES AND THE WHEAT.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

We are to call your attention this morning to one of the most profound and deeply-suggestive parables, embodying a vast amount of spiritual truth, in one of those figurative narratives, so many of which have come down to the present day as precious heirlooms from those times and countries when and where all great teachers have been wont to convey deep spiritual teaching by the use of simple and even commonplace similitudes. The further we travel Eastward the nearer do we come to those climes and peoples where and among whom illustration is almost the sole method employed for the conveyance of instruction. Primitive people and Orientals are very like children in many respects: they take in ideas more readily through the eye than through the ear; and this accounts for the highly-symbolical character of their worship and the multiplicity of the images and parables employed by them.

The Northern and Western races are far from emotional and childlike when contrasted with the dwellers in Southern and Eastern climes. The brain of the earth is situated only a few degrees south of the North pole, to which the needle of the compass ever faithfully points, not to the pole itself. This brain of the earth is the great centre of magnetic forces, and the superabundance of magnetism generated there is one great cause of the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights. As men live nearer to this brain of the earth they become less poetical, romantic and visionary, and more intellectual. The dwellers in the temperate zone are far more prosaic, literal, matter-of-fact people than the dwellers in the tropics; and thus all religions which have originated in Asia or Africa are far more deeply

couched in symbol than any systems which are the outgrowth of more Northern thought.

Religion itself is the same everywhere, and so great is the similarity in the teachings of all the great moralists of the world that we can only with extreme difficulty approximate toward a discrimination between the teachings of one and another of the world's very greatest moral exemplars. Preaching in India among the Buddhists is often scholarly and eloquent; but the Buddhist lecturer or priest relies almost entirely upon illustration to give point to his argument. The tales often told of the Orientals and their legends, though very wonderful, are rarely exaggerations; eye witnesses are neither few nor far between who are willing to stake their reputation as men and women of honor in making positive statements concerning the wonderful feats performed by Fakirs, Dervishes, and others in Oriental climes. Jugglery, legerdemain, and every form of imposture has at times surrounded Oriental occultism, as the fungi surround the rocks, or as the barnacles cling to them; and yet the rocks themselves are solid realities, existing for centuries, and destined to live on and on, no matter how veiled from the gaze of the passer-by they may be by their attachments.

In every age, in every system, tares and wheat have grown together in the field of the world, and so utterly impossible is it for ordinary people to root up the tares without plucking up some wheat at the same time, that all great teachers have unanimously voted in favor of letting the tares and wheat grow together until the harvest; but in the harvest hour angels will know full well how to discriminate between the precious and the vile, and will always be

found competent to eliminate all chaff from the spiritual field.

Before entering directly upon the subject immediately before us—the harvest of the earth—allow us to offer a few of our reasons for our faith in the spiritual or esoteric side of ancient records. One of our mottoes has always been, Let every man be ready to give a reason for the faith that is in him to any who may ask. Unreasoning faith is apt to be destructive of morality, and is certainly a foe to all intellectual progress; but intelligent faith is always belief founded upon knowledge. If you know the character of one of your comrades you rely upon his word, even though you have no immediate opportunity of verifying his statements; while the man whom you know to be a liar cannot enlist your confidence even when you have no evidence that he is not speaking the truth.

To give a reason for our faith in the science of correspondencies we will offer the following remarks: In the first place, it is a well-known fact among all students of ancient history that the only influential people among the Egyptians, Persians, Hindus, Chinamen, Jews and other nations in bygone days, were both civil and ecclesiastical rulers. The priests in Egypt were mostly men of high birth, and, indeed, all members of royal families were also members of the priesthood. In Asia, among the Brahmans, the higher caste alone included the educated people, and all Brahmans of the highest caste were influential priests; these priests and learned people were not only ministers of religion, but also physicians, lawyers, men in charge of the weights and measures, &c. These learned men had a language of their own; they formed themselves into secret societies, and from these very ancient Orders the Free masons and Oddfellows of to-day have descended. Freemasons usually claim to trace the history of Masonry among the Jews, as far back as to the date of the building of Solomon's Temple, 1150 B. C., which marvelous edifice they regard as a Masonic structure. Egyptologists are now, many of them, tracing the history of Masonry still further back, at least to the date of the building of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in the delta of the Nile, which cannot have been later than 2170 B. C., while various Hindu explorers trace the existence of secret Orders in India much further back than all historic periods.

A sign-language is far older than a written one; the strange story of the Tower of Babel and the confounding of tongues is, in our opinion, a myth or legend, framed to account to the ignorant for the breaking away of the nations from the original universal sign-language, and the adoption by different peoples of various written languages. In the opinion of many modern philologists, the English language is destined to become the universal written lan-

guage of the future. It is a tendency of nature to return to her former attainments in this manner—that, as the music of nature is being performed on the instrument of any world or organism, the harmonies repeat themselves an octave higher than when they were previously sounded. Nature makes no single retrograde movement; but as along the musical scale the fingers may pass from lower C to higher C, striking again the same note, but an octave higher as the melody ascends, so in all human attainments we come apparently back again to positions formerly occupied by the inhabitants of earth, while, in reality, we have reached a new elevation, and are sounding our notes higher than they have ever been sounded by us before. If the world has ever known a universal language of sign and symbol in days gone by, it will attain to a state in which it will possess a universal language again; but this language of the future will be the language of the living tongue, rather than of the dead stone. The manuscript is constantly superseding the laborious method of engraving hieroglyphics, and as the human eye and ear become equally trained to observe, speaking will be as powerful as acting, and tongues will be understood as readily as symbols.

In infancy the eye drinks in information previous to the day when the child can understand sounds, and the very last sound which the child really fully comprehends is the language of the human voice when it undertakes to become the vehicle for the expression of ideas. Object-lessons are often far more valuable than written or spoken ones; the child or person who can neither read nor write can understand a great deal that pictures teach. The eye is so large a door, and so open a window in the human organism, that, through this wonderful member, the soul can both portray its inmost emotions and receive knowledge of the external things surrounding its house, the body. Anecdotes are more frequently remembered than arguments; because anecdotes always relate to real life, while many an argument leaves us in the realm of abstractions. The abstract is always hazy and indefinite; and thus the greatest sinners enjoy hearing sin condemned in the abstract, but so soon as the moralist dares to particularize, to bring his subject down to the level of every-day life, his auditors are offended; he is personal, and personalities are vulgar and objectionable, they say; while without personalities it is often impossible to rectify an error or expose a crime.

Abraham Lincoln has been severely criticised by reason of his exceedingly free use of the illustrative method. When persons pressed for time, and boiling over with an important theme, called upon Garfield's brave old friend, our first martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, he was

often known to coolly remark, on listening to the burning utterance of his intrepid visitor: "It reminds me of an anecdote," and then proceed to relate some simple incident which bore a life-like resemblance to the fact immediately brought before his notice; and in this way he often found the solution of many a knotty problem, and quelled the impetuous zeal, while he did not attempt to dampen the praiseworthy enthusiasm of the great men who so constantly surrounded this brave and illustrious hero. The old proverb says, "Discretion is the better part of valor," and so it is in many instances; but we always remember that to be cautious we need not be cowardly and deceitful, as many very cautious people are. Cowardice and deceit are altogether alien to cautiousness, as cautiousness and conscientiousness are often well developed in the same brain. It would be easy and interesting to linger a long while over the meaning of ancient symbols, and we could easily deliver a long course of lectures, or fill several volumes, if the time was at our disposal with which to dwell on symbolism, its origin and uses.

The Stage exerts a greater influence to-day, in many cities, than the Pulpit, and no words can be truer or more deeply needed to-day than those of Rev. James Freeman Clarke in his admirable treatise, "Self-Culture," where he urges the truly moral people in the community to elevate amusements and not discard them, and, by liberally patronizing good plays, to induce managers to exclude everything whose tendency can, with any show of truth, be said to be demoralizing. The Passion Play of Ober-Ammergau, in Germany, presented only once in ten years and occupying a whole day, has no doubt done more to impress upon the hearts and brains of the spectators the leading incidents in the story of the sufferings of Jesus than all the sermons and books of hundreds of scholarly divines put together. To them Christ is there on the boards of that enormous theatre, condemned after his betrayal by a false friend, and crucified between two malefactors. To the overwrought multitude the tragedy of Palestine is reënacted, and their faith in a living Christ is strengthened as it could be in no other way. And is there not always a Christ in the world, in some guise, and is not the Spirit of Truth ever spurned by the great mass of mankind, when it first reveals some new fact or beauty? But erewhile those very Pharisees and Sadducees and Scribes, who shouted after the representative of Truth, "Crucify him!" are ready to deify and worship the prophet whom they have crucified or stoned. Every truth and all its disciples and exponents can afford to wait, for days of judgment are sure to come, no matter how long they tarry, and the searching fire is sure to try everything; and

while it will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire the reaping angels will gather every golden ear of wheat, and safely garner it in celestial storehouses.

As we look over the world to-day we see the wheat and tares growing up together, sometimes scarcely distinguishable the one from the other; but the appearances of tares are only temporarily deceitful; while they are young they all look so much like the offspring of the good seed that it would be well nigh impossible to uproot the bad without plucking up some wholesome wheat with them; this the iconoclast often does; and while a destructive as well as a constructive work may be needed to be done in this age, and in this state of society, new developments of thought are sometimes in reality specious sophistries, though they appear at first sight like new revelations from above; while on the other hand, many a truth looks like a falsehood while it is in the bud, but so soon as it begins to flower its beauty and majesty are self-evident. Our advice to all men and women everywhere, with reference to the attitude they should assume toward all novelties, is this: Have no opinion until you have knowledge concerning that about which an opinion is to be formed; remember that all new things are not true, and that all truths are not new, and be careful to let no preconceptions war against your calm and careful scrutiny of all that is presented to you, ever bearing in mind that that which is destined to accomplish great results is usually of slow growth, while the mushroom that springs up in a night may only live a day. Large bodies move slowly, and great organisms take many years to mature, and thus "until the harvest" it is frequently impossible to distinguish correctly between the tares and the wheat, as by their fruits alone can we judge of their nature and worth.

On this day we celebrate one of nature's own festivals, the ingathering of the crops literally. Physically speaking, in this land certainly the harvest of the earth is now ripe; the fruits have been gathered in ere the commencement of the winter quarter; and this ingathering of the fruits of the soil must ever suggest to the contemplative mind that greater harvest of the earth in which we are all vitally and immortally interested. In every life crises arrive; "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"—an assertion the truth of which can never be denied while experience remains to testify to the fact of effect ever following cause in the history of men and nations, mortals and immortals.

There are many, young persons especially, who think slightly of little sins, or the beginnings of evil. The Romish Church has always made a distinction between mortal and venial sins; this distinction is sometimes just,

but at other times unwarrantable; for, unless every sin be regarded as deadly which is committed against light intentionally, and every offence venial which is committed in ignorance, we shall make unwarrantable distinctions between offences equally grave, but in various stages of development. In the harvest of human life all stages of growth are passed through; by every habit, good and bad, by all that produces the results both of sickness and health, weal and woe, it is ever in the history of the development of all things—first the blade, then the ear, and at length the full corn in the ear. Practices are like seeds deposited in the bosom of the earth. At this season you can walk through vast acres of sown land and utterly fail to discriminate between it and uncultivated soil; the earth is brown and bare; not a vestige of vegetation is to be seen in either place, and winter covers both fields with her mantle of ermine. So you may outwardly gaze upon two boys or girls, young men or women; both are outwardly healthy, happy and prosperous; but all the while one is sowing the seeds of life and happiness, and the other of death and misery in his or her constitution, by the constant practice of open and secret virtues or vices. The harvest time of maturer life will display either a crop of wild oats or a harvest of nutritious grain.

It is not with immediate results that we should be always most concerned; the wise man always looks ahead, and like the busy ant, lays up a store of provisions for winter use during the long, bright summer days, while food is plentiful; or like the busy bee, who industriously employs every summer hour in flitting from flower to flower and gathering in a sweet repast and ample provision for coming cheerless days, when flowers lie dead and skies are leaden. Even though an ant-hill is sometimes discovered by a company of merciless boys, and the little creatures forced to rudely quit their shelter, and though the bees often have their honey taken from them, still, every philosopher will admit that wisdom persuades us rather to make provision for a want that may never be felt, than leave ourselves utterly destitute in case of emergency; and even though there be no future use for the goods we have collected in our youthful and prosperous hours, the very act of working is in itself enjoyable.

All life is motion; nothing can live even a moment after it ceases to move; light and heat are generated by the movements of atoms; without friction there could be neither warmth nor brilliancy in the universe; without motion neither sound nor color could exist, as forms and sounds and colors are all alike the result of movements causing vibration, and as all nature is ever in motion and it is impossible to live without doing something, all our actions

are simply, if we be free agents in any sense, a choice between working in obedience to our higher or our lower instincts. Even if there were no conscious hereafter for man it would be worth while to live good lives here, for the peace and joy arising from the approval of conscience are so intense and soul-satisfying, that any one having once really experienced them would gladly barter all that the world calls wealth and happiness for one sweet hour of perfect peace of mind.

The importance of forming good habits in early life can never be overestimated. It is thought by many experienced men that what a child learns before he is five years of age he never forgets. The earliest impressions every one knows are always the hardest to erase; and is it not frequently the case with a very old person that, while he forgets almost every incident of his middle life, he remembers perfectly the scenes and experiences connected with his early childhood? Every parent and guardian should feel it a bounden duty to be as kind and courteous (if possible even more so,) to a child than to an older person; words, acts, and even thoughts which would do no harm to a person of mature mind and body, are deadly in their influence upon a little one. Ask your children to open the window or close the door; to fetch your slippers or run to the post; to pass plates at the table and bring articles from an adjoining room, in just as polite tones as you would employ when addressing an honored guest. Children are highly impressible, extremely sensitive, and often very knowing. They understand and institute comparisons when older people think them entirely unobservant; they think it manly or womanly to imitate their elders, and while they are not born totally depraved, we all know they come into the world with conflicting tendencies—some leading in the direction of a heaven of virtue, and others on the road to a hell of vice. The care bestowed upon the young is entirely insufficient to meet the demands of the age. The sophistries indulged in to save trouble and expense are often too base to merit a moment's countenance. To allow children or youths to form bad habits, to indulge vicious propensities "moderately," is to violate every known law of nature; and when you begin to run down hill it is often impossible to arrest your progress, though a yawning precipice gapes below. Your only safety lies in not taking the first step in that direction.

Young men learning to smoke and unaccustomed to the taste of liquor, usually detest and are made sick by their first cigars and glasses of intoxicants; but having overcome their primary antipathy, it is no hard thing for them to become inveterate smokers or inebriates. If the enemy, the adversary of all happiness and virtue, be allowed to sow the tares in the field

of your lives in your early days, you may never be able to uproot them until your harvest hour arrives, when, summoned from earth to unseen spheres, you will be confronted with your own life and all its consequences. If the building you have erected be composed of hay and stubble and other refuse, then the fire attacking your work will consume it, and you will suffer loss. Spirits who have lived frivolous and wicked lives on earth, caring only for self-gratification, on entering the spirit-world find themselves despoiled of all their possessions, stripped of all their garments, and, like persons burned out of house and home by some dread conflagration occurring in the dead of a winter's night, wander about houseless and forlorn, seeking rest but finding none. These spirits are the unhappy "ghosts" who have given rise to weird stories and legends in every age and among all peoples. Whenever and wherever interrogated they announce themselves as the misers and egotists of earth, who, like the rich man in the parable, needed fierce torture beyond the grave to awaken within them the long-dormant sense of obligation to others. Young men and women who trifle with edged tools and imagine you can leave off injuring yourselves and others at any moment, be warned in time, and remember that for you in early bloom and vigor of life, more than for any other class, NOW is the accepted time, the day during which to secure salvation from error and its sequences.

Wishing to say a few words upon the parable and its inner meaning directly, not only to extract from it the hidden marrow of which it is full, but also to combat, and if possible overthrow a popular and terribly wide-spread delusion concerning it, we shall at once, without any apology or introduction, characterize the inferences usually drawn therefrom as utterly opposed to the plain teaching of the parable itself, as well as thoroughly repugnant to common sense and the highest feelings of human nature. You are, no doubt, all of you, so well acquainted with the Orthodox interpretation that we need not employ any time in stating what that interpretation is. You have all, no doubt, heard or read some of those glowing and frightful descriptions of the last judgment, which have formed the painter's as well as the preacher's theme, in your early days; many of you were, no doubt, frightened nearly to the verge of insanity by reading or listening to sermons informing you on the purported authority of a book designated "holy," that the wheat signified all those who had washed their souls in the blood of the lamb, through faith in the atoning merits of Jesus; while the tares were all who had rejected the atonement. You were told that on a day which was to dawn as suddenly as the coming of a thief in the night, the harvest of

the earth would be gathered in, and that yourselves, and all human souls, would either be accounted ripe and precious grain, worthy a place in the everlasting granary of heaven, or worthless tares, only fit to be burned with unquenchable fire in hell.

It is obvious that no such doctrine was ever in the mind of the author of the metaphor. As if human souls were some of them tares and others wheat, they would have been spoken of as of equal age, and from the commencement of the history of the field which is the world, we should have been introduced to wheat and tares planted in that field at one time. But the parable says that only the wheat existed there at first; good seed only was sown by the Master of the vineyard, afterwards cometh the enemy or wicked one and soweth tares; and we are also told that while men slept the enemy came and sowed the tares, showing plainly to every intelligent and unprejudiced reader that the tares are not men themselves, but something introduced into their lives and spheres by an adverse power while they slumber. This slumber which gives the adversary an opportunity cannot signify the natural rest of the wearied frame after the work of the day; it must mean that torpid indifference to all that is really worth living for, which is so frequently called sleep in the Bible. Satan always finds mischief for idle hands and brains to do. Satan, to us, is not a mighty archfiend, the rival of the Infinite, but the lower instincts in man, the aggregate of undeveloped spirits, in and out of the form, who tempt the unwary to evil, and all that in the world is as yet crude and inharmonious.

It is nothing short of blasphemy and grossest inhumanity to entertain the thought of our Great Evolver bringing some of us into existence to damn us for all eternity. We are as we are born; we cannot be hopelessly bad unless there is something hopelessly evil in the Great First Cause from which we sprang. All our energies, our powers of spirit, mind and body must in and of themselves be good, and only evil when perverted. If the Originator of our being is not infinitely pure (and the greatest argument of all that have ever been produced in favor of the existence of a perfectly good God is based upon the historic and self-evident fact that every generation witnesses some improvement in man, as well as in the earth which we inhabit); if we did not proceed from a perfectly noble fount, nobility would not be increasingly manifest in every succeeding age.

The vices of Solomon and David would be regarded as intolerable to-day, and yet they were respectively called the wisest monarch of the East and the man after God's own heart in the days when they existed on earth. So great has been the development of human nature since

those days, that a high average standard of goodness in those days is about on a par with the lowest moral condition of society at this hour. Facts everywhere show that the world is daily growing better and more beautiful, morally as well as materially, and the very complaint of the pessimist, who fears and thinks that things are growing worse, is a manifestation itself of the increasing moral sensitiveness of all leading communities. To us the tares and the wheat are not two great sections of the human family; but they are the rival powers of selfish vice and unselfish virtue ever prevalent in society, each struggling incessantly for the mastery.

The Bible is a cabalistic work; the Vedas, Puranas, Zendavesta, Hermetic writings, and, indeed, all ancient scriptures, are also cabalistic. Swedenborg was undeniably correct in his statement that all scriptures had an esoteric as well as an exoteric meaning and value. He considered that since the days of Job the science of correspondences was lost to the knowledge of men until it was re-discovered by himself, and given out to the world in his published volumes in 1757. Had he been more thoroughly acquainted with the real state of affairs he would have known that no truth ever revealed to the earth can ever leave it; it may be lost sight of by the multitude, it may be entombed in solitary and un-thought-of places, it may be recognized only by a few initiated ones; but no art or science is ever wholly lost to the world. All over the Orient secret societies have existed from time immemorial; they exist at this day; there are individuals connected with them in this very city; indeed, in every part of the globe; but the very existence of these mystic Orders is kept a profound secret from the public, as the Cabalists have had for their watchword in all ages—"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you." To them all are dogs or swine who are unwilling to undergo the necessary discipline enabling a man who has successfully passed through all initiatory degrees to become an adept, or master magician.

Freemasonry to-day possesses, deeply veiled beneath external symbolism, and hidden deep from the knowledge of all who merely take the three degrees possible in England and America, the profoundest secrets of days of yore; six other and higher degrees passed by many in India are unknown to those Western peoples who merely recognize an external form of Masonry, and an establishment of a convenient brotherhood of mutual protection. To believe in the interior sense of the Scripture, is only to recognize a fact demonstrated to all really learned men who know anything at all of history, and the condition of the Orient to-

day. In olden times, as you are aware, only a very few persons were educated, and these all belonged to a privileged caste, both royal and priestly. When it was only with great difficulty and at enormous expense anything could be recorded, it would be entirely out of place to write a history filled with trifling incidents. Only very important events were registered, and these were always employed as a veil to conceal deeper truths which only the initiated ones were privileged to comprehend.

The great triumph of man in the fast-approaching era even now coming, will be the opening of every lodge-gate, extending the advantage of brotherhood to all humanity; the proclamation upon the housetops of mysteries formerly only whispered into the ears in secret of a few specially elect ones; and when science has explored further than she has yet penetrated into the mysteries of ancient lands, the people at large will meet face to face a gigantic system of philosophy in which will be found the key to the most august and usually impenetrable wonders of nature. In that day, when men everywhere shall have interpreted the wisdom of the ages by the light of a living inspiration, neither Bibles nor churches nor priests will have any power to work upon the fears of men; knowledge will dethrone superstition, and positive facts overturn all vague hypotheses.

The work of the spiritual messenger to-day is to reconcile all facts and prove to men how, in obedience to the laws of nature, events mis-called supernatural have taken place in every age and among all nations. The parables of Jesus are especially representative of the figurative mode of conveying instruction; and by watching children's movements, and seeing with what avidity they grasp the New Testament to read the stories in it, and how delighted they are with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and similar allegories, we need no argument to convince us that parabolic teaching is the most effectual among childlike people. In this allegory of the tares and the wheat we are introduced to man as he is; his nature itself in all its parts is originally divine. The Author of all being sows only wheat in his field; every talent is calculated to bring forth fruit if only properly employed. The adversary comes in in the form of pride and sensuality, and inordinate self-esteem, and the fall of man does not by any means necessarily date back six thousand years; a man, woman or child falls from innocence into sin the first moment he is conscious of a struggle between the lower and higher natures which he possesses, and yields to the lower.

Swedenborg in his "*Arcana Cœlestia*" alludes to the six days mentioned in Genesis as referring to six stages of regeneration through which every soul must pass ere it reaches the

Sabbath of rest from all toil and sin. Many ministers of Swedenborgian churches are evolutionists; and while they believe that certain books of the Bible contain an interior sense and are the divine word, they acknowledge that the literal sense is not out of harmony with the ignorance of the multitude in the days when the books were written. Any one knowing anything at all of the secrecy attending all spiritual communications among Oriental priests, will not be at all surprised to hear that Moses, a great law-giver, priest, and reputed son of a monarch's daughter, should, while versed in the knowledge and customs of the Egyptians, have established among the Jews a Masonic Order, having preserved most carefully all the inner meanings common to Egyptian writers. One of the ablest arguments in favor of evolution we have ever listened to, formed the greater part of a sermon delivered one Sunday morning in the New Jerusalem Church, Argyll Square, London, Eng. Rev. Maurice Davies, a firm Spiritualist, though a clergyman in the Church of England, in his highly interesting and authentic work, "Unorthodox London," alludes to a similar incident.

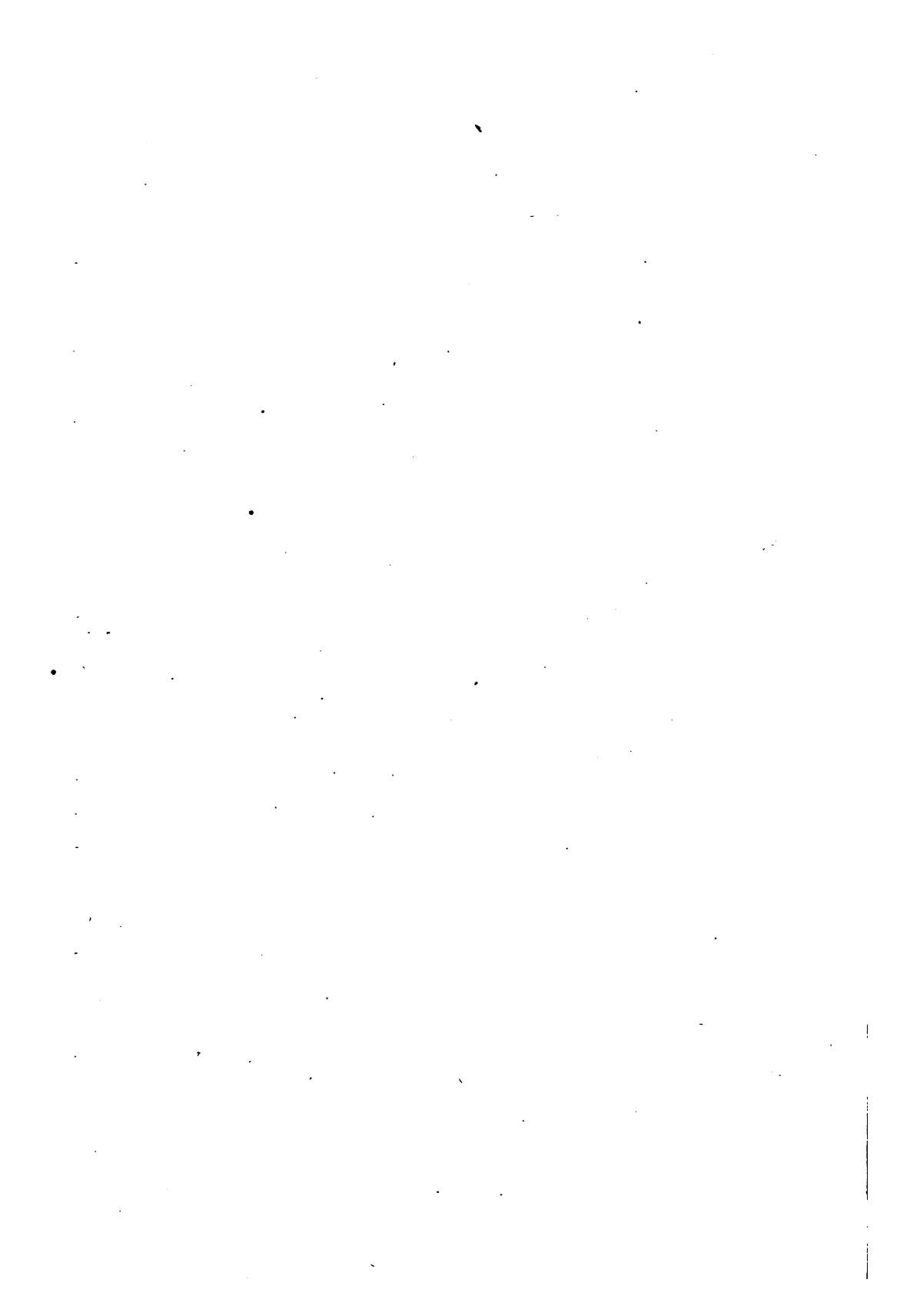
We should not perhaps dwell so much upon the necessity of searching for truth beneath the letter of the Bible, were we not frequently accosted by persons of culture and real goodness who earnestly desire to arrive at truth, but who cling with a tenacity nothing can destroy to the Bible of their forefathers. The curious old book lives; it cannot be crushed out of existence; it has got into the hearts of a people who venerate it blindly and will not discard it. Let them understand it and it will be their blessing; let them remain blinded by priests, not perceiving its real meaning, and it will be a stumbling-block and rock of offence. People, if they can be persuaded that the Bible really does not teach the horrible doctrines which they have been taught to hold, will not cling to them any longer, as a biblical sanction is all that supports them. If the Bible teaches everlasting punishment, then Christendom will not forego the belief; and thus we owe a deep debt of gratitude to those scholars of the Universalist denomination who have most laboriously struggled to convince the public that everlasting hell finds no place in the sacred text. To us it is a matter of small moment what the Bible sanctions, as we always gladly turn from the written to the living word, and no more expect to be sustained spiritually

by the inspirations which blessed the ancients than we expect you to sustain your physical bodies on the food you ate yesterday, without eating a fresh supply to-day; but just as your life and power to eat evidence the good you have received from former meals, even so in like manner does the receptive state of humanity to-day bear witness to the good accomplished by olden outpourings of the spirit.

Turn to the one hundred and ninth psalm, and read David's frightful imprecations. Literally speaking, nothing more atrocious has ever been encountered in profane literature. In the letter the words are blasphemous; the vilest forms of cursing and swearing are here employed, and no attempt to lessen the enormity of the language has ever been successful; but spiritualize the psalm, and it becomes entirely changed.

The enemies of David are lusts and passions, impersonal evils; the children of the daughter of Babylon who are to be dashed against the stones are falsities which need to be broken in pieces as they are thrust against the rock of truth. And so the tares in the parable destined to be utterly consumed in the great day of judgment are the individual and national vices which are to be utterly consumed in the searching fire of universal enlightenment.

May we not employ the words of the Apocalypse, "Cast in thy sharp sickle, for the harvest of the earth is ripe," to the present day? A dispensation is almost ended; a cycle is nearly completed; the great pyramid speaks eloquently in stone concerning portentous events now at hand; the state of every nation upon earth corroborates the testimony of the pyramid; France, Germany, Russia, Turkey, England, Ireland, India—look at any one or all of these countries and tell us if it is not clearly shown to you that a crisis is at hand. All that is good in government, in religion, in social life, will be gathered into the granary of a new nation. The tares of injustice, despotism and falsity must be burned with unquenchable fire. If we are sowers of good seed, then shall we rejoice to enter into greater bliss and larger liberty, as the earth becomes more suited to our wants. If we sow the tares of craft and selfishness, then, when the crisis comes, the bitter discipline of seeing our treasures consumed, and we left desolate, will be our necessary discipline to fit us eventually to be bearers of golden sheaves; no soul ever becoming a tare.



NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

On this day we celebrate the third anniversary of the formation of this free and independent Society, to which we have now ministered for over three years, not, indeed, exclusively, as many other workers in the spiritual vineyard besides ourselves have addressed you from this rostrum; but still we have always sustained our peculiar relation to you, as it was through our inspiration and your kindly and generous coöperation that these meetings were commenced.

It may be well in a few simple words, this morning, to briefly review the past and analyze somewhat our present position. We ought to be all conscious of having some definite work to do; and having found out what that work is, to do it with our might, neither seeking the praise nor fearing the displeasure of men; but satisfied with the blessed assurance that we have done our best, and that our own consciences, and higher beings who can scrutinize our inmost thoughts, are satisfied with our honest efforts. A person may be sincere and yet mistaken; but where the error is of the head, and not of the heart, it is soon rectified. As soon as the individual is satisfied that he has acted unwisely, further light corrects the mistake, and all new light is seized with avidity by one who is really striving to improve the condition of his fellow beings, even though at the cost of some personal self-sacrifice; but when the error is in the heart, rather than in the head, when motives are impure, the individual, until converted, literally turned round, is outside the pale of the possibilities of reclamation—as no one is dragged into the path of virtue against his will.

So long as a spirit is obdurate, angels will entreat, persuade, allure; they will do everything

short of coercing. Coercion is a method of proselyting employed by undeveloped men and spirits; it savors of tyranny; it is invariably associated with despotism; it has led to terrible wars, to terrific martyrdoms, to wholesale murders; it is not an angelic method of procedure, and its effects, even at their very best, are but like unto the consequences of cutting off noxious growths in your garden with knife or scissors while the roots of the weeds are still left, under cover it is true, but full of vigorous vitality, ready to spring up again with greater force than before.

So all harsh and coercive methods employed by those who are called upon to deal with the misguided and vindictive, only lead to a temporary cessation of open wrong-doing. In the absence of superior and more effectual, because more spiritual methods, they may for awhile help to protect the innocent from the clutches of the destroyer; but bottled-up fury only increases in strength the longer it is confined, and so the outwardly respectable, who are vile within, but live decently in a superficial manner for fear of the consequences attending misdemeanor, are often the most dangerous persons in a community. They are like barrels of gunpowder awaiting the touch of a very small lighted match to occasion a general conflagration.

All true religion is of the soul and speaks to the soul; it does not aim at frightening you into the path of virtue, it would rather wean you from dangerous paths by stirring up within the flames of divine love. Religion and morality are truly one, and thus all truly great teachers have agreed on moral grounds. Theological differences register stages of intellectual un-

foldment; on knotty points of theology uniformity is at present impossible, but the real duties of life are viewed in pretty much the same light by the truly great seers of all ages and climes.

In all our visions of the Church of the future, there looms up before us a beautiful temple filled with human souls. Their modes of work and worship vary, even as the pursuits of men and women variously endowed must always differ; but they are all working for some grand end, all moving toward some celestial goal, all leading others forward to the extent of their ability. In this great Church there are many congregations; but they are formed in obedience to the law of natural selection. As the chemist discovers that certain atoms affinitize, while others repel each other; as chemistry teaches us that there is a law of affinity working through all space, resulting in the aggregation of atoms or molecules producing solid substances; as we learn by all natural studies that attraction and repulsion prevail everywhere, we agree substantially with that great prince of poesy and the drama in Germany, the world-renowned Goethe, who announced to the world the deeply philosophical doctrine of elective affinity, a doctrine endorsed by all practical experience in this world and in the spheres of spirit.

The Romish, Greek, Anglican, and indeed all other Orthodox bodies, aim at uniformity, and seeking this they destroy the true spirit of unity. They would reduce all men to one level; force them all to live one and the same life; bind all in the shackles of some antiquated creed, and compel all to approach the deity through the selfsame ecclesiastical rites. What is the result? Heresies and schisms have made the church's life a burden to itself. Even from the first Christian century, the sayings and doings of the highest dignitaries have frequently been of such a character that many turn in disgust from the very name of Christian, it has been associated with such frightful dogmas and hateful conduct.

To-day we are all suffering from two great causes of bigotry: the one is the bigoted attachment of some to fossilized customs and institutions; and the other the violent reaction in the direction of Atheism, consequent upon the disaffection of the masses, who think for themselves, toward the organizations which have persecuted men in all ages for their attempts to use the reason with which they are endowed, and from the use of which the church has striven to debar them. Let us all steer clear, as much as possible, of all bigotry and uncharitableness; let us be cosmopolitan enough to recognize the good wherever we find it, but independent-spirited enough to avow our own convictions manfully, without waiting to be patted

on the back by some ecclesiastical dignitary or council of churchmen.

While perusing the pages of recent issues of some spiritualistic journals, we have felt almost ashamed at the display of rejoicing manifested by some who appeared anxious to let the public see that the Church of England did not altogether refuse to sanction intercourse with the departed; as though they thought it a great thing to receive in any measure the endorsement of the English establishment. Spiritualism, Theism, Free Religion, and all Independent Systems of Thought, need no endorsement, and wish for none, from those who continue to use the Athanasian Creed, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Church Catechism, and other relics of barbarism. So long as election and reprobation, an angry God and an endless hell, are presented as everlasting realities to the minds of men in the prayer-books of a large association, the spirit-world will seek rather to draw men out of the vitiated creedal atmosphere of Episcopalianism, into the fairer and freer pastures of religious liberty; and when Spiritualists and others see that the truths they have got possession of have worked upon the minds of the best men in the church, causing them to dissent from many of its established doctrines, never that the church has liberalized itself as the result of its own contradictory and harrowing dogmas, then, and then only, will independent truthseekers realize the dignity of their position, and put their shoulders to the wheel which impels forward the car of enlightenment.

Popularity is not the one thing needful; to be in a majority is generally to find one's attainments extremely mediocre; every really great man has been in a minority, or stood single-handed, until his own efforts have helped to educate the masses to an appreciation of the truths which he proclaimed. Conformity to existing customs is right enough so long as your conformity is sanctioned by your moral sense; but whenever conscience does not sanction it, nonconformity becomes a plain duty.

We are reminded on this day particularly of two eminent nonconformists, entirely unlike each other in many respects, and yet both virtually agreed in their honest endeavors to do for humanity whatever they could; we allude to Thomas Paine and Theodore Parker. When we arrived in Boston more than three years ago, on the first Sunday afternoon spent in your city (the first Sunday of November, 1878) we occupied the platform of Parker Memorial Hall, speaking by kind invitation of the First Association of Spiritualists in this city, then assembling regularly in that place. On the first Sunday of the next month (December, 1878), acting in accordance with the express wishes of our unseen directors, and in harmony with the wishes

of many friends, we commenced a regular series of Sunday morning services in Paine Memorial Building, as a need seemed to us to exist for such services.

Out of that effort this Society has sprung, and in it are to be found many who were conspicuous in Parker Memorial also. We have always considered it very significant that we should deliver our first public address in this city in a building erected in honor of that great spiritual teacher, Theodore Parker, and that we should thence proceed to Paine Hall, as to us Parker has always presented the idea of an intellect drawing from the soul a continual supply for every need, and Paine an intellect taking especial cognizance of material things, and working up from the form to the spirit. Possibly the combination of both methods is our and your peculiar mission. Parker was styled a transcendentalist; he was a Spiritualist of the highest type. He could afford to dispense with phenomenal evidences, it is true, for he had the witness in himself, and that witness of the spirit within a man is as complete and satisfactory evidence, yea, far more so than any evidence which can ever appeal, however forcibly, to the external senses.

Intuition and inspiration are ever beyond reason; and yet, intuitional and inspirational revelations are ever in accordance with knowledge, as far as knowledge extends; but just as the student of mathematics may watch the learned professor work out a problem rationally, and yet be unable to follow him in his work, because of his mental inability, even so human reason, when contrasted with spiritual attainment, is inadequate to follow out all the workings of the soul. It is an awestruck spectator; it stands appalled before the grandeur and immensity of the spiritual universe, as you may, any of you, stand speechless before the sublimest works of the great masters, and utterly fail to understand by what subtle pathways of genius they have been led up to the pinnacle of glory upon which they now stand. To such a mind as that of Theodore Parker, God was no mystery—the spiritual life of man no uncertainty. He positively knew that God, and a good God, existed. His spirit had held converse with exalted, celestial intelligences. He sometimes questioned the *modus operandi* of spiritual manifestation; he was not sure that ghosts tilted tables or rapped on walls; he doubted those phenomena; they appeared to him trivial and unimportant, beneath the dignity of an exalted soul. To-day he is learning afresh concerning the ways of the spirit; adding to his transcendental conceptions the practical demonstration of the soul to the senses. To-day he is a learner, while before he was a teacher; a learner of those mysteries of the spirit which to him were unintelligible during

his earthly career. But while with you in the flesh he had caught such rare glimpses of the absolute potency of spirit that he unhesitatingly pronounced his verdict in favor of Spiritualism, while its phenomena to him were not always acceptable.

Behind this attitude of Parker to the spiritual movement of this century many facts are concealed, and we shall certainly not be misemploying our time if we linger a little over the causes of religious and philosophical difference of opinion on earth.

Spiritualism distinctly reveals that communications received from the unseen world do not proceed in any direct sense from the Infinite Mind, but there, as here, God is ever revealing himself through Nature. The human soul is the most perfect thing in nature with which we have ever had any dealings; but souls are variously conditioned and severally experienced in this world. You would not all choose the same companions, were you left free to select your associates at all times. Swedenborg announced an incontrovertible fact when he told the world that the heavens and the hells were all alike full of spirits who formed these spheres as the outgrowth of their interior states, and that as men became confirmed in truths or fables, so did they gravitate to the society of the virtuous or the vicious. Even in hell the spirit may know some enjoyment; but it is the wretched, satiating, ultimately disgusting pleasure that the confirmed sensualist knows on earth; it is a nauseating substitute for happiness, and one gladly exchanged for solid joy, immediately the spirit is alive fully to the sense of his own folly and degradation. Then out of the hells into the heavens will he immediately commence to rise by his own efforts to aid others; but until the motive is purified, there can be no ascension into heaven, for spiritual spheres are states far more than places.

In ancient times, as to-day, especially in certain remarkable periods of human history, men have held converse with the unseen world, and have drawn to them those particular beings who have, for the time being, represented the plane of their highest aspirations. The Druids were a wild and barbaric people. They, like the Romans, admired physical bravery; but there was very little of the love-element which softens and sweetens character developed among them. They were, many of them, highly sensitive mediums. Living as they did in the forests, under the shade of the oaks, their minds and bodies became subject to spiritual influence; their thoughts and desires went out to spirits who were on their own plane of life at the time, or at best but just above it. Thus Woden, Thor, and numerous other deities of cruel and warlike temper, were their gods. These strange and weird beings were real individuals. The

grotesque forms in which they beheld them emblemized their interior state, which took an appropriate form in their surroundings, as the body, clothing and habitation of a spirit are all symbolical, and together constitute a faithful portraiture of the spirit whose environment they form.

The Romans and Greeks, holding communion with warlike gods, held real intercourse with the spirits of departed warriors, and the martial attributes of Mars and Jupiter corresponded exactly to the real condition and characteristics of those beings who are absolutely the lords and gods of warlike peoples. All the gods of the nations have had a real existence in some form and in some sense; the mistake has been in attributing to these finite spirits infinite power and authority. The very Lord of the Jewish people, during their wanderings and captivity, proved himself to be none other than a limited and jealous spirit. No doubt the leading spirit in the band who controlled Moses was at times sorry for what he had done; no doubt he repented of mistakes when he discovered that he had acted unwisely; but his conduct throughout was that of a weak, erring, though disembodied mortal, entirely inconsistent with the course which an Almighty and Omniscient Being would pursue. This God of Israel descended to acts of treachery; he recommended duplicity, applauded cunning tricks. Would a being possessed of Infinite Power ever have had recourse to such intrigue?

Theodore Parker, holding communion himself with loftier spirits than these old-world gods, plainly denies the verbal accuracy and plenary inspiration of the Jewish scriptures; he cannot call this Jehovah God, and thus he discards whatever portions of the Bible represent God as being lower in the moral scale than were those holy souls who fed his spirit with celestial manna, and gave him to realize that man and woman, black people and white, are equal in the sight of the impartial Ruler of heaven and earth. To him Jesus is an elder brother and exemplar, a true friend to all the sons of men, but not a vicarious saviour or atoning priest; to him God requires no sacrifice other than that offering which David pronounced the only really acceptable one when his heart soared into highest spheres. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, oh, God, thou wilt not despise." These words, coupled with passages from Isaiah, Micah and others of the prophets, all go to prove that in moments of spiritual exaltation the prophets of days gone by rose far beyond those lower spirits who ordinarily addressed and controlled them, and, reaching up and out into the higher heavens, they received their ideas of the will and works of God from brighter and purer

minds than those who hover round the threshold of earth.

There are three significant expressions in the Bible made use of with reference to spiritual rulers: God, the Lord God, and the Lord. These terms have frequently been confounded very harmfully and confoundingly. "No man hath seen God at any time," is an oft-quoted text, and appears at first sight to those who have not discriminated between terms, to contradict very positive statements made in other places, that men have frequently seen and conversed with the Lord; but the term "God" has always been employed by spiritual scribes to designate the Infinite Mind beyond man's finding out; "the Lord God," the highest angel, the governor or presiding spirit of a universe or planet, and "the Lord," the tutelary spirit of a nation, clan or tribe. Thus your Lord and ours may not be the same; there are lords many, but only one Supreme and Infinite God. But as this Supreme Intelligence is beyond mortal perception, and as all communications reach us in a direct sense through the mediumship of guides and familiars, it is not to be wondered at that men and nations have always worshiped gods who have been actually but little in advance of themselves.

Does it surprise you to be informed that spirits having place and power on earth, hovering over the earth, overshadowing the peoples among whom they dwell and over whom they once exerted despotic sway, should delight in sacrifices and costly offerings? Does it surprise you to be told that in Thibet the idea that the Grand Lama never dies, that his spirit passes into the body of his successor, is not wholly a delusion? As there are spirits who preside over that country who constitute an enduring, regnant sphere, these same spirits, from age to age, exert dominion over the inhabitants of the land; and hence the stagnant or fossilized state of the territory. It is even so with Turkey, where Mohammedan power continues, and has ceased not to spread in a southerly and easterly direction, until Palestine and a large part of Africa have become the abode of converts to Islamism. The sign of the crescent is now in the ascendant almost throughout Africa; and while the cross is struggling for a foothold, it is almost always rudely repulsed. In Rome, and, indeed, all over Europe, the power of the Romish church is waning; the Pope now considers himself a prisoner in the Vatican, and acknowledges that his position is becoming intolerable; while in the British Isles and in America the Roman Church is rising into power and prominence. The great hope of the church to-day lies in the conquest of the new world. Those armies of spirits who are yet attached to the papacy, are actively working for the establishment of their

hierarchy in this land, and it is on account of their directing their efforts to making proselytes here rather than in Europe, that Catholicism here appears to grow and thrive, and there to decline; but church authority in this free country can never be what it has been in the old world. The common schools providing secular education for everybody, extensively neutralize theological influence. Priests and rulers here are not more highly educated than ordinary citizens, and thus a return to the bondage of the dark ages is an impossibility, unless education ceases. The gods and goddesses, the saints and saviours of the various nations and systems are often real personages; but while real, not by any means infallible, or necessarily impeccable, or endowed with power akin to the Infinite.

No conception of good can ever be exaggerated; nothing can ever be too good to be true, or too bad either; because the state of mind evolving the thought is in itself the abode of the spiritual substance or being it delineates. All characters in history are portraits of the varying developments of the human mind. Every artist has his own Christ and his own Madonna, and though all may pattern after the model presented in the gospels, no two eyes view the same person or thing in a precisely similar way. As man progresses, the spirits with whom he comes in contact are ever higher and higher. Those who really govern him are intelligences of a loftier grade, and while we do not doubt that there are vengeful beings in the unseen realm who, like the deities adored by Calvin and Jonathan Edwards, delight in the sufferings and fall of those whom they have not chosen to especially favor, these beings are so far inferior to the Father and Mother God of Theodore Parker, that we cannot fancy any sane person, with any developed moral sense, revering the former after having received an introduction to the latter.

Far be it from us to say that God, as an infinite individuality, does not exist. All existence displaying intelligence is organized. Organization is inseparable from the display of intelligence; and if organisms be graded, if there be a lowest, as we know there is, why not also a highest, even though that highest be beyond human comprehension? What that highest is we do not pretend to decide, other than by stating that the highest cannot be inferior to those who do not proclaim themselves as the highest, and who yet are as superior to the Orthodox Deity as a philanthropist is to a tyrant. The Monotheists of to-day are in reality Polytheists; but not admitting into their creed the doctrine that there are more gods than one, though that one exist in three persons, they attribute to that one and only God all the attributes they could more easily ascribe to a variety of deities.

We know there are many persons who will say that it is presumptuous and absurd to claim that we know there is a God, because we have never seen him with our bodily eyes, taken him by the hand or listened to his direct voice. If it be foolish to believe in the existence of everything that cannot be handled, then all belief in the emotions of the human heart is ridiculous. If invisible things cannot be discerned through the agency of visible things through which they operate, then no one can know anything of the existence of the mind, or of steam, because those things have never been seen by mortal eye. All nature's greatest forces are invisible, and to deny the existence of the invisible is to deny all that there is in nature minus the shell which encases nature. You may have received a letter, and never having broken the seal, utterly ignore its contents and declare there is nothing there except the envelope; in the same way you may deny the soul of things, discard spirit totally, and content yourself with scrutinizing the outward shell which veils the real life of all things.

Modern science is an examination of the envelope in which spirit has deposited its messages to men; and no more does Spiritualism or true Religion deny the facts of science, than one is obliged to deny the handwriting or the crest, stamp or seal on the outside of a letter, because he knows that there is something within which these appendages are only employed to cover. Science, so far as she goes, appealing to human reason, is correct. Even in the Episcopal Church, representative clergymen are telling us that if Geology says God did not make the world in six periods, of twenty-four hours each, it is entirely unnecessary for us to agree with the letter of Moses in order to be religious. Spiritual truth does not conflict with any scientific discovery. Intuition does not instruct you to dethrone reason; but whither reason cannot climb, there intuition soars, grasping a spiritual universe, and revealing things beyond the ken of the unaided intellect.

If Darwin's theory of evolution be the correct one, to decide that men physically sprang from apes and that apes sprang from seaweed, is not to deny the existence of a Great First Cause for all things, for science utterly fails to account for the existence of those wonderful primal atoms of which it prates, endowed as they are said to be with powers of selection and other wonderful gifts. If Darwin be correct, God remains and rules behind the atom. There is a spiritual cause for every material effect, and the question asked by geology is not so much, did God make the world? as it is, how and in what length of time did God make it?

If religion appeals to the moral sense, if worship of a superior power be natural to man; if a

belief in spiritual existence and interposition permeates all history ; if man exhausts not all his mental powers while sojourning on earth ; if men have everywhere naturally believed in a Supreme Spirit, in immortal life for the human family, and in varying stages of happiness and misery beyond death, then all natural religion may be said to be revealed, and all revealed religion to be natural.

Considerable space has been given in sermons and newspapers to a dissertation on Mr. O. B. Frothingham's change of attitude toward free thought and natural religion. He is reported as having said that he has now far more faith in revealed religion than he had three years ago. A stay abroad has convinced him that believers in revealed religion are not losing ground, and that many of them are very sincere and charitable people. Will Mr. Frothingham be a little more explicit, and let us know more clearly what he means by "revealed religion"? If he means that God reveals himself spasmodically

and miraculously, once in a while to a privileged few through a very few channels of inspiration, we cannot place any reliance on the truth of revealed religion, as we, like Parker, cannot recognize the supernatural ; but if he means that the spiritual and physical worlds impinge upon each other, that, through the laws of nature, spiritual things are made manifest to the soul of man, that we have spiritual as well as physical senses, and that a revelation made to the inner man as positively reveals a fact as a demonstration to the senses can possibly do, then we rejoice in the light of "revealed religion"; natural as well as revealed ; religion revealed to man and within man in accordance with the immutable workings of the changeless laws of the universe.

That this truly revealed religion may be ever your solace and inspiration, and that, while as intutional as Parker, you may adopt the life-motto of Paine, "to do good is my religion," is our earnest prayer and wish for you all.

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A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

Last Sunday we celebrated the third anniversary of the formation of this society. We then endeavored to supply you with a brief outline of the work we contemplated doing when we first called you together in Paine Hall, now over three years ago. From the day that our meetings commenced until now we have always earnestly striven to steer clear of unreasoning iconoclasm on the one hand, and of blind veneration for ancient institutions on the other. While cordially endorsing and devoutly sympathizing with all the truth we can discern in the Christian system, we have never applied to ourselves or to our work the title Christian, as we have never assumed the title Jew or Buddhist, though we essentially agree with the fundamental principles of faith in one and all of the great religious systems of the world. But to us religion is a life and not a creed, while to the nominal Christian, Jew or Buddhist a good life needs to be supplemented by a certain kind of faith in olden records and historical personages. We certainly should hesitate a long while before venturing to call Jesus a Christian or to attribute the origin of the system known as Christianity to this pure-minded and whole-souled philanthropist. Christianity is so mongrel a system that some of its professors deny almost all that others of its leading lights proclaim as essential to salvation. We should with equal reticence apply the title Buddhist to Sakya Muni Gautama, the last of those wonderfully inspired men who have periodically arisen to protest against the vices and errors of Asiatic belief and custom.

To our way of thinking, all adjectives, by qualifying and limiting a comprehensive noun, detract from the dignity and grandeur of the

noun they qualify. Religion is too wide and all-embracing a term to need qualification by the employment of such sectarian terms as Mohammedan, Buddhistic, Jewish or Christian; not because there is little or no good in any or all of the systems known as Judaism, Christianity, etc., but because truth will always refuse to be confined to any particular age or nation. It will enter all your societies, permeate your every organization, pervade all your homes, speak through all your orators, guide the pen of all your scribes; but without, as well as within all institutions, independent of as well as through the instrumentality of all your recognized teachers or mediums, it will exert its sway and instruct humanity.

The religious systems and organizations of to-day are on the wane, because they do not appeal to the varied needs of human nature sufficiently. They fail to take man as he is and the world as it is and minister lawfully to the varied needs and desires of that nature. Stereotyped prayers will not voice the utterances of all souls; fossilized ceremonials will not expand and allow room for the ever-enlarging mind to grow and thrive. To expect all men to agree intellectually is to look for an impossibility, at least in the present stage of the world's progress. Uniformity is the goal to which the churches unnaturally wish to attain, but nature is never uniform, though she is a unit. No two flowers are precisely alike, no two countenances identical in form and expression; and does not the beauty of the world and of character consist in diversity in unity? The ancients, while worshipping the Deity as a perfect sphere, beholding the variety of the operations of the Divine Spirit, introduced the triangle as

well as the circle as a symbol of the Godhead; and while this figure has three sides, proclaiming diversity, its threefold nature does not detract from the idea of absolute unity. The Trinitarian enforces the idea of diversity, but in such a way as to lead the intellect to reject his conclusions. The Unitarian acknowledges the unity, but denies the trinity. These rival bodies of Christians are like the various men who gazed at the chameleon in the fable: one found it blue, another yellow; and at length a witness declared that it was white. They were all right, yet all wrong—all right partially and relatively, all wrong absolutely.

No finite conceptions can ever be more than relatively accurate when they are glimpses of immensity beyond human comprehension. If God could be accurately described and fully understood by you, you would certainly be equal and possibly superior to the Deity. The greater can never be contained by the lesser; and if the mind of man be smaller than God, then the mystery of God will ever remain to some extent a mystery. Eternity is a word frequently employed, glibly used by children, as much so as by adults and philosophers. But who has ever fathomed eternity? Who has ever solved the problem of the ages, and satisfied himself that he verily comprehended infinity? The wisest men are ever they who acknowledge that they are baffled at every turn in their researches. Newton, after having made vast discoveries, revolutionizing the faith of the world on scientific matters, compares himself to a little child picking up pebbles on the beach, while the ocean of truth lies unexplored before him; but the shallow-brained scollist, who has scarcely penetrated one step into the mysteries of truth, imagines that he knows all there is to be known, and would fain make the world believe in his power to empty the ocean with an oyster shell.

When we hear of the arrogant assumptions of certain Materialists of to-day, we can only smile and pity their simplicity. Whatever their puny minds do not contain, according to their reasoning, can have no existence. Whatever facts, however well authenticated, have not been demonstrated to them, are of necessity fraudulent. Their reason is adequate, in their opinion, to empty the ocean of truth, and leave not a drop of water in the sea for any future visitors to the fountain of intelligence.

Unfortunately for Spiritualism and liberal religion to-day, this class of persons is not wholly unrepresented by those priding themselves upon their liberty of opinion and breadth of thought. Bigotry is by no means confined to those who superstitiously revere old-time dogmas. In the ranks of materialism are to be found many persons quite as bigoted to their own negations as the most devout Catholic can

ever be to the assumptive dogmas of his church. In Christendom it has been customary to ostracise all who would not believe. Among many so-called radicals it is the fashion to persecute and sneer at all who will not disbelieve. One extreme always produces another. It is but a step from Ultramontaniam to infidelity; while from Spiritualism to infidelity the distance is so great that no human mind has yet been found able to traverse it. We make this positive assertion despite the fact of there being many reputed Spiritualists who are so near the confines of the atheistic realm that one can scarcely detect the difference between their opinions and those of avowed Materialists. But there are many kinds of professing Spiritualists, and among them are many who, though no doubt very sincere and well-disposed people, are not properly entitled to the name of Spiritualist. "Phenomenalists" would suit them better, as it would be a title expressive of their real intellectual and spiritual status. It is quite possible to believe that certain mediums are perfectly honest; that certain phenomena which have occurred in your presence are not to be attributed to imposture or self-deception, and yet accept the explanation given by Spiritualism as only one out of several possible explanations. You may talk of the spiritual hypothesis as simply one out of many hypotheses, but that which is hypothetical is altogether unlike that which has been clearly demonstrated to your understanding.

To believe that spirits perchance communicate; to believe in a possible God and a probable hereafter, is scarcely to be in that frame of mind which constitutes a Spiritualist properly so-called. Those who are really Spiritualists have been convinced of the reality of spiritual experiences beyond a peradventure; to them there is no perhaps in the case. They are as able and ready to affirm that they have witnessed spiritual beings as they are to defend the doctrine of their own and their friends' real existence, and having once discovered a truth they can never let it go. The reason why so many waver and doubt is because they have never been really convinced; they imagine that they are satisfied one day, and the next they consult another medium, clamoring for a repetition of the identical test they considered all-sufficient the day before. Many men and women are going up and down the country declaring that they have been Spiritualists for twenty-five or thirty years, and yet all they appear to desire is a simple rudimentary manifestation of spirit power, precisely similar to evidences which have been furnished them hundreds of times before. Whenever a new medium is introduced they are anxious to spell out the alphabet of spirit communion afresh, and receive a test from some brother, or sister, or cousin from

whom they have received thousands of similar communications, and through hundreds of mediums.

We do not deprecate by any means or to any extent the very natural desire felt by most of you to enter into conscious communion with your own beloved ones; but let this communion be progressive and not stationary. If you have once received a satisfactory test, convincing you that they still live and love you, that test should suffice; you need never seek a repetition of this evidence; but this need not prevent you from holding frequent intercourse with your spirit friends, only, having learned from them the alphabet of the spiritual language they are commissioned to teach you, you should seek for higher instruction. Go to them for new lessons and strive to graduate from the primary to the higher schools of spiritual instruction. Primary schools are ever a necessity; children are always found ready to fill them; but the same children would be thought dunces indeed if they never left them and made room for other babes in knowledge. All manifestations of the spirit, from the raps and table-tippings to full form materializations and advanced spiritual teachings, are necessary; but the public must remember that the law of the spirit is ever and everywhere the law of progress, and that all these phenomena are supplied to satisfy the needs of those whose requirements are as varied as the supply which comes in answer to the demand. If any complain that certain demonstrations of the spirit are trivial and commonplace, the commonplace character or triviality of spiritualistic phenomena is but a reflection of a corresponding state of the human mind while searching for spiritual enlightenment. You have the whole universe to draw upon, and if there be a power in Nature enabling the foolish in the spirit-spheres to answer unto your folly, surely there can exist no law forbidding the wise to answer unto your wisdom.

In the work of spiritual propagandism we warn you all against the unwise methods employed by some as means for enlisting public attention and sympathy—methods which are not the expression of a spirit of wisdom, and which, though momentarily triumphant, produce and minister to morbid curiosity and transitory excitement rather than to deep feeling and earnest thirst for knowledge. Flaming posters announcing wonderful exhibitions of spirit power in broad gaslight, on a specified evening, in a conspicuous public hall, may suffice to draw an immense crowd of curious seekers after the latest and most surprising novelties of the times. But such advertising retards rather than advances the progress of spiritual truths in the community, as the kind of manifestations possible under the circumstances are

of so questionable a character that the excited multitude are far more likely to leave the building pronouncing Spiritualism an imposture and mediums tricksters, than speaking favorably of the proceedings. While trance and inspirational discourses can be delivered to immense multitudes of people, and the same conditions need not always be observed for their delivery as are necessary for the production of physical phenomena, still sensationalism is always out of place in connection with Spiritualism; and flaming bills calling the attention of the populace to a spiritual medium, as placards attract crowds to the circus, are entirely out of place at all times; for we must ever bear in mind that the mission of Spiritualism is not to amuse but to instruct; and that the spirit-world must be left to devise its own means for the propagation of the truth which it alone can reveal.

If persons expect to make money out of their mediumship, as they would out of any business enterprise; if they only care for mediumship as a means of acquiring worldly wealth, they may retain certain mediumistic powers, and, for a while at least, amass some gold; but it will be at the expense of all that is purest and most abiding here and hereafter. Spirits of the highest order are not unsympathetic or blind to the earthly needs of their chosen instruments; but with them the spiritual work is ever kept in the foreground, while the material means for supplying physical necessities are a secondary consideration in the eyes of wise guardians and guides. The soul must ever exist and operate prior to a material form or expression, and thus material agencies for carrying on spiritual work must ever be set in motion in response to an already existing spiritual force and necessity. We are none of us so foolish as to overlook the practical side of the work on earth, or to imagine that mediums can live without visible means of support while in the earthly body; but our advice to all workers in the spiritual vineyard is to see first to the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and while doing their duty faithfully trust that all things necessary for their earthly welfare shall be added unto them. Certain of the sayings of Jesus concerning the estimate to be placed upon worldly goods and human efforts, are open to the severest criticism of those whose God is Mammon. Those political economists and Martha-like housekeepers who place a high value upon earthly comfort and respectability, and bestow little thought or energy upon the acquisition of spiritual riches, may style Jesus a fanatic, and laugh at the whole Essenian brotherhood as a company of foolish fanatics; they may even go so far as to pronounce certain New Testament statements on these subjects immoral, while the immorality is in themselves, and not in the

great teacher whom they criticise. They, having an inordinate regard for temporal good, will willingly starve the soul to feed and clothe the body; caring more for a sumptuous earthly dwelling than for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, they will barter everything for the sordid dust of earth. To them nothing can be more foolish, and even wicked, than the conduct of those who will expose themselves to beggary, if need be, for the truth's sake. Their lives are one constant struggle for the bread that perisheth, for the applause of men, for worldly fame and grandeur; and then how frequently is it the case that when they have reached even to the summit of their worldly ambitions, their souls are compelled to go out suddenly, leaving behind them all they valued, and become, in the world of spirit, paupers indeed.

The great question to be decided very often is, which of two kinds of riches will you seize when both are within your grasp? when you can have one or the other, but not both? Will you build only for time, or for eternity? Will you fare sumptuously and attire yourselves delicately on earth, leaving your spiritual necessities all unmet, or will you forego some earthly luxuries that your higher nature may be satisfied? All the men and women you admire and reverence were heroes and heroines. The public heroism displayed on the tented field, and the yet greater heroism of many private persons whose lives have been long series of struggles and disappointments, always attract you to the extent of causing you to fall down and worship at their shrine. All the really brilliant stars in the intellectual galaxies with which you are familiar through history, and the abiding results of their labors, have shone with a peculiar lustre by reason of their fortitude amid the thousand and one daily worries and persecutions to which they were subjected. Bruno, Galileo, Copernicus, caring naught for the approving smile of an ignorant rabble of people who represented the civil and ecclesiastic power of their day, preferred to devote themselves to the study of nature's laws and glories, even though poverty, ostracism, yea, the stake itself, were the earthly reward of their labors. Columbus would sooner leave all the pleasures and comfort of his sunny home in Southern Europe, and brave the perils of the deep in a frail bark, manned by a mutinous crew, following the guiding light of that intuition which revealed to him the existence of another continent across the waters, peopled by the dreaded monsters of fact and fable, than obscure the light of his genius by wrapping his talent for discovery in the napkin of worldly expediency. Luther, Melancthon, John Huss, the Waldenses, the French Huguenots, Joan D'Arc, the Wesleys, your Puritan forefathers, who

cared more for liberty to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, than for all domestic felicity and civil distinction at home, have earned a place and fame in history; have enshrined themselves as monarchs in the affections of the world; have bequeathed to posterity a legacy of true nobility, placing them on pedestals of moral and intellectual greatness, which none can occupy save those who would gladly exchange all worldly advantages for the one pearl of greatest price, the truth itself.

Perfect, absolute truth they did not attain to, but relative truth, an approximation toward the absolute, truth far greater than that revealed to their time-serving opponents, they certainly did grasp by their self denial and boldness. Infallible they were not, models of perfection in no sense; but instruments in the hands of angels for the ushering in of that glorious dispensation of universal light and love, the true golden age of the future, they certainly were. They were all vessels filled to overflowing with pure water from the wells of everlasting life. Fuller than quite full no vessel can be. The pint mug can never hold as much as the gallon jar; some minds are like thimbles in capacity when contrasted with others that are like tanks, and thus it is impossible for all to attain to the same measure of truth. All cannot bear the same amount of light; that which will illuminate one will blind another, for mental and spiritual organs of vision are variously conditioned, as are bodily eyes.

It is a common and very true saying that what is one man's meat is another's poison. Many children grow up stunted, physically and mentally, in an atmosphere where other members of the same family grow and thrive. Parents make a sad mistake when they provide one dish and one only for the satisfaction of the appetites of a large family. Every child born into the world brings with him peculiar needs incidental to his special mission in life. To respect these needs is wisdom; to despise or ignore them is to sow the seeds of pauperism, crime and every ill. There are no persons to be found anywhere who have not their own specific places to fill and work to do. The human family is like a large temple, or like the human body itself; many parts and many members are absolutely essential to form the edifice or complete the organism. Just as the eye cannot be dispensed with because you have arms; just as the windows of the house cannot be made to do duty for the stairways, even so one person or class of individuals can never stand in the stead of another individual or section of the community. Could your President occupy his seat of honor in the White House, if there were not men to till the ground, gather in the harvests, prepare his food and fashion his gar-

ments? These toilers do not directly rule the nation, but they do so indirectly; not alone by the part they take in electing Representatives, even to the President himself, but also in actually making it possible for those holding high offices to exist. For if these men did not perform the work you style menial, your distinguished personages must needs starve or provide for their own necessities, and the provision they would have to make for physical necessities would debar them from the use of those essentially intellectual powers which they now almost exclusively exercise.

You perceive, therefore, that the great principle of republican or democratic rule is the recognition of the dignity of labor; the portioning off of individuals and classes of persons, with a view to the utilization of all the talent the country possesses; but while some must speak and others listen, while some must write and others read, some spend their lives in solving the mighty problems of human life and destiny, and others their days in making provision for man's physical necessities, all are equal if all are faithful; but diversity is included in unity. The churches are fast losing their hold upon the affections of the people, for the reason that they all strive to reduce men to the level of an impossible uniformity. Uniformity means stagnation, repression, and is in spirit, as well as in form, antipodal to the true unity of the spirit which Spiritualism ever seeks to maintain. There may be unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. Men and women may differ widely in opinion on almost every conceivable subject, and yet respect and love each other deeply and tenderly. Church organizations have been beneficial to the extent that they have bound men together, uniting various types of character and employing various talents in a common work needing diverse energies and methods of operation; but their prejudicial influence has been the outgrowth of the authority some have striven to exercise, while disqualified to rule by any other means than the most ignoble. As long as men are afraid of God, terrified with the thought of hell, if they dare to arrive at another conclusion than that to which their ministers have arrived, all intellectual and moral progress is impeded in the land; and people become morbid, hypocritical and cowardly as their lower propensities are appealed to by fear only.

Love allows perfect freedom; love alone can fulfill the divine law; we shall only truly obey a law when we love it. The love of law is as necessary as the law of love, and until the wisdom and equity, yea, and the mercy of a law, are fully established in the minds of the people, coercive methods may suppress exhibitions of crime, but criminal tendencies will never be uprooted from the popular mind. The severer

the laws the more common is crime. When hanging for sheep-stealing was abolished in England, farmers were not less secure in the possession of their flocks than before this change in legislation. The wildest characters are ever the most ready to vote in favor of capital punishment and every form of legalized inhumanity, even though those very laws which they favor place their own lives in jeopardy, while those who antagonize unmerciful measures are the very ones who are least likely ever to find themselves in the hands of the law. Love must ever control, not fear. A religion of fear led to the Inquisition, and every horror of the sixteenth century; a religion of fear may cause hundreds of thousands of free-born men and women to bow their necks under the galling yoke of priestly despotism. One old man in Rome, claiming to be the vicar of Christ, the successor of the Apostle Peter, the infallible head of the Church on earth, may intimidate millions; but as he is honored and yielded to from motives of fear, as intelligence always displaces superstitious dread, one by one the Pope's treasures are passing from his grasp, one by one his former allies are forsaking him; his dominions are ceded to the crown of Italy, he is afraid to breathe, his very life appears to him to be in danger. He refuses to leave the Vatican, so much does he dread assassination, though if he be the chosen representative of God on earth, surely he might feel confidence enough in the divine protection to feel safe everywhere and under any circumstances; but the religion of fear which Rome disseminates is not calculated to inspire confidence and love.

The Church has ever depended upon the State for protection; its only safety has been in its power to command the civil government. The union of Church and State, not in partnership, but as master and servant, has ever been the dream and ambition of Romanism; but, alas for it! alas for the Greek and Anglican churches, also! culture, universal knowledge, despoil them of the aid they can only steadily receive from a nation which imagines that it is imperilling its eternal happiness if it dares to act against the decree of the Church.

If it be true of the Church that its power as a despotic agency is waning, what may be said of those earthly governments which have long controlled vast multitudes of men? In Russia, Nihilism threatens to annihilate the government at any moment. The assassination of the late Czar was the natural fruit of the old-time tyranny which fostered the universal hatred of the government, out of which alone systematic Nihilism could possibly have sprung. The late Czar was a good man, far superior to his predecessors who died natural deaths; the present Czar is a model of justice and mercy when compared with the general run of Autocrats, but yet he

cannot sleep or taste of any enjoyment without alarm. His hair is bleached, his form shrunken, his stalwart form robbed of its proud and glorious dignity by reason of the plots against his life. Why is he the object of attack? Not one who knows him fails to respect him as a man, but his office throughout Russia is held in detestation. Why? Because for centuries the kingly throne has been the seat of unblushing despotism, and while present Emperors may seek to reform ancient institutions and win back the lost favor of the populace, they can never by any virtue of their own induce men to regard favorably a system which makes the safety of a nation depend upon the disposition of an individual; a man, moreover, forced upon the people independent of their vote; a man whom they are taxed to support, whose extravagances they must pay for even though one of his darling schemes be the shedding of their blood.

Whenever trust is reposed too exclusively in an individual, a community has built its house upon the sliding sand of individual permanence. A virtuous parent may have for his heir a prodigal child. At any moment the monarch may pass from earth; and what then? No matter how free and prosperous the nation during a certain man's lifetime, his death may plunge it into the darkest abyss of wretchedness and suffering. Iconoclasm is usually indiscriminating; reactionary movements are ever apt to be as violent in one direction as their predecessors have been in its opposite; and thus, to-day, the hatred felt toward churches and rulers, priests and bibles, by a large number of civilized people, is unnatural, but necessary and inevitable in this transitional age. New wine cannot be confined in old bottles; it will burst them; new ideas will not continue to run in old grooves. Every age has had its own prophets, its own systems, its own forms of spiritual and intellectual embodiment. Men like Savonarola in many respects, though scarcely as self-sacrificing as he, may try to put the new wine of the modern spiritual revelation into the old bottles of existing organizations, yet the new truths will not abide these limitations; their young, vigorous vitality disintegrates, shivers the form into fragments; the thought is liberated, and though it apparently falls fruitless to the earth not one particle of it can be lost, and the experience gained in the failure of an effort to imprison it, has taught the world a lesson of priceless value.

Ernest Renan in his English Conferences proclaimed to his audience his sincere conviction that churches were necessary; but he points to a new type of church adapted to a new age. Spiritualistic societies have sprang into existence in many places and suddenly disappeared; gigantic plans have been discussed for the main-

tenance of regular spiritual meetings, but, for some reason, all have refused to abide. During the past thirty-three years so rapid has been the enlightenment of the world that men have learned more in that time than they have often learned in several centuries. Hence the necessity for various organizations may arise and pass away rapidly. The institution which, like the mushroom or the insect, is here to-day and gone to-morrow, appears in response to a demand for it, and dies when its work is done. That which is hastily conceived and speedily arrives at maturity, is only needed for the passing hour; while the forest oak, taking many years to reach maturity, lives to witness the rise and fall of countless generations of insects and mushrooms. Great needs are always the producers of equally large supplies; let the need exist and the demand will produce the supply. Never is there on earth even one mind prepared for more than it receives; at the very instant a heart or brain is open to receive the light it enters the aperture.

In every remarkable period in human history when spiritual manifestations are prevalent, the unusual and extraordinary demonstrations of spirit power that occur do not result from the greater nearness of spirits to the earth, but are occasioned rather by the unusually sensitive and receptive condition of the planet and its inhabitants; just as when you open a door or window, you admit air and light without necessarily altering the quantity of the light and air outside. When a human heart or intellect is like unto an open window the sunlight of spiritual presence streams in. Men may close all their windows and suffocate when the air is blowing freely close to their window-panes; they may shut themselves in cellars or lock themselves in their studies, and deny all the color, light and beauty of the outside world, presumptuously ignoring its loveliness, because their eyes have never beheld it. Atheists and materialistic philosophers live in the basement of their dwellings and deny the existence of what they may readily see by looking out of their attic windows. We do not blame them for so doing; possibly their duties are such as to engross all their time and attention in the prosecution of physical studies. A cook may be usefully employed all day in the kitchen, and the food she prepares may be indispensable to those who need it to enable them to engage in intellectual labor or perform spiritual work; the delver for coal in the bowels of the earth, the diver who descends to the bed of the ocean, may be doing their own work, even though they are shut out from visions of stars and suns. The medical student, analyzing the construction of man's physical structure, may have all he can attend to in the prosecution of such researches; but those whose eyes have been

opened to higher things, those whose ears have been attuned to celestial melodies, can never relinquish their hold upon spiritual realities because others are unaware of their existence. As well might you deny the existence of flowers, that you have seen, handled and smelt, because others have not perceived them; as well deny all that there is of beauty in music, because some men are deaf, or have never listened to sweet melodies, as refuse to trust the evidences of your own soul and senses in reference to spiritual truth. To us those things of which we speak are stern realities; to us the teachings we give out to the world are the only possible deductions from experience. We ask no one to coincide with our opinions, we ask no one to accept all our statements; but we beg of all to remember, that every soul on earth and in the realm of spirit has its own individual experience; and while you have no need to endorse anything out of the range of your own perceptions, you are neither wise nor honorable in your treatment of others if you deny as impossible that which has come within the scope of their knowledge.

In the establishment and organization of a spiritual society unity must rest on essential principles, not on disputed dogmas. Every careful and experienced spirit fully knows how utterly impossible it is for all spirits to agree in their utterances on matters relating to speculative philosophy and personal experience, as every individual has his own life to live; and one description of the spirit-world can no more tally with all others, if all be equally truthful, than a portrait of your father need resemble that of your nephew, or a description of France agree with a description of Patagonia. All spirits express positively that which they know; when they are wise, and lack positive information, they give their opinions cautiously. Only the ignorant and self-righteous ever undertake to support a negation by boldly telling you, once for all, that a truth, never having been revealed to them, cannot be a truth. Such doctrines as the reëmbodiment of the human spirit in successive earthly forms, the location of the spheres, the occupations of spirit-life, the existence of elemental spirits, the possible extent of communion with the unseen world, must ever awaken controversy so long as all do not possess equal light, and have not had the same experience. To one spirit reëmbodiment is a fact; he has lived on earth more than once—he knows it; he remembers perfectly his experience; he can trace the line of his development. This experience belongs to the individual. To announce it is his right—possibly, at times, his duty; and for you to deny the truth of his statements because his experiences do not tally with your preconceived ideas, is to endeavor to pare down the facts of nature until

they are small enough to enter the theories you have constructed for their reception.

Theoretical surmising is very well in the absence of positive knowledge; but a theory bears the same relation to a fact that a landscape picture painted in the locality it represents bears to the imaginative view executed by the fanciful dreamer in his studio. Let us all remember that one spiritual society need not do more than represent one especial stage of spiritual attainment; and that, in so large a city as Boston, for instance, a spirit of dead letter uniformity rather than true unity would advise the assembling of all Spiritualists in one hall, to listen to the utterances of one inspired speaker. Let us have fifty, one hundred, or a thousand societies if we need them; not rivals of each other, but fellow-workers in one great field of industry. Let our societies ever be centres of practical work; but pray remember that practical work is not confined to physical activity. Whatsoever refreshes the weary spirit, after a day's or a week's labor, has a direct practical bearing upon every portion of daily toil. Whatsoever consoles the mourner, enlightens the ignorant, strengthens the weak, stirs up a spirit of charity in the breast of any, is eminently practical, even though it may be a poetical, ideal, or transcendental force.

We must all strive to realize that a society must be formed of those who are drawn together by irrepressible attraction; those who are impressed to join a society are the only true members of it; to join it or support it is not your duty unless you feel called upon to take part with certain others in any work. If you are not prepared to agree and help each other, to join a society is to introduce a disintegrating, a destructive element. Material means must not be sought until spiritual results are attained; persons must give because they wish to contribute, not per force; and instead of gathering at all times around an individual who may be a centre of spiritual and intellectual light, you must become attached to truths, and to each other, and remember that however precious any instrument may be in the hands of the unseen, sometimes an instrument is taken away that you may rely more entirely upon direct communion with the spirit-world through your own gifts and intuitions. Individualism is a failure at length if it does not lead to organization; individualism precedes organized effort, because there are prophetic souls calculated to take the initiative in some new work of great importance.

Such men as Theodore Parker and O. B. Frothingham have illustrated the fact that when a society is simply an audience, remove the speaker and the society vanishes. That position the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society of Boston maintains to-day. It is one of the smallest,

certainly not the largest of the Unitarian Societies, and yet it finds its home in a building specially designed to perpetuate the work of Theodore Parker; but Parker was a teacher simply, not an organizer. Parker has been, to some extent, followed by Frothingham, who also is not an organizer, and to-day seems sad and dissatisfied because his large congregation fell to pieces when he went to Europe. Far be it from us to undervalue the importance of inspired teachings. None can know more fully than we the deep necessity for enlightening the

masses and calling minds around a common centre prior to organized work; but the acorn must become the oak some day, the seed must be the flower at some time, and this become in its turn a seed-bearer. So with all individual effort, organization must follow it as a result, but never precede it as a cause.

May angels and all kind guardian spirits who love and watch over you assist you so to hear and obey the voice of the soul, that you may all become living stones in the true temple of the Spirit.

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WHAT KIND OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION WILL BEST SUPPLY THE NEEDS OF THE HOUR?

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

On Sunday last, in our remarks upon the true basis and best methods of religious or spiritual organization, we endeavored to bring before you a few conclusions, the result of considerable thought and experience connected with this subject. You will remember that we most emphatically protested against a spiritual organization resting upon a material base. External things and operations are of course necessary in this world to the carrying out of spiritual projects, but every truth exists in the realm of soul before it assumes any material form; every idea is embosomed in the heart of genius before the world can witness any embodiment of thought. The soul of all things exists prior to the material shape, which at the same time reveals and hides the spirit of nature.

According to the letter of Genesis, it appears that Moses, or whoever was the author of that portion of the Pentateuch which contains the account of the birth of Adam and Eve in Eden, assumed that physical forms existed prior to spiritual powers within; as the man Adam is said to have been formed from the dust of the ground before God breathed his spirit into him, and caused him to become a living soul. This selfsame theory appears to have been endorsed by Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians, where he says: "Howbeit that was not first that is spiritual, but that which is natural." The word translated natural, would of course more appropriately read material, physical or animal, as we cannot, with our present light, divorce spirit from nature; the spirit of nature is the life of nature, as the spirit of man is the life of man. No man hath seen the spirit at any time, and yet all have felt its power; remove it from the frame, and no matter how exquisitely fashioned

is the body, the beautiful structure at once becomes inanimate, and shortly a prey to corruption. You may with bodily eyes have gazed upon materialized forms, but these forms, as you are doubtless aware, are only the garments of an invisible intelligence, or a shape extemporized by spirit power to enable you to realize spiritual presence.

It certainly appears that the doctrine of the procession of spirit from matter is taught in the Old and New Testaments; so also is the doctrine of materialism apparently taught in the book of Ecclesiastes and elsewhere. Possibly some of the Biblical authors were not themselves fully aware of immortality, and of spirit-life antecedent to every vitalized form. Be this as it may, we know that Jewish and early Christian, as well as Persian, Egyptian and Hindu scribes, were ever wont to conceal the esoteric meaning of their writings in exoteric formularies adapted to the comprehension of the peoples whom they addressed; and thus, whatever may be or may not be the intrinsic value of any part of a Bible, the higher intelligence, the greater spiritual unfoldment of today than of yesterday, places you in a position to gaze more directly upon spiritual things in their naked integrity than your forefathers ever could.

To us everything has a spirit, or, rather, everything is spirit. When children are conceived, an already existing soul, awaiting embodiment, enters into the materials provided for its reception, and the constant and unintermittent action of spirit upon and through matter produces, in due time, the full form through which the real being can gaze into outward life as through an open window. In every depart-

ment of art and literature you are confronted with the fact of the preëxistence of spirit. Every form is outwrought in the chambers of man's invisible being ere it takes on an external semblance. Ideas are before words, and are the cause of them, or words are meaningless jargon; ideas are of the mind and soul, while speech is purely physical. Man is endowed with speech, animals are not; man can devise a system of expression enabling him to commit to paper his thoughts, that they may educate unborn generations, while animals can only in vague ways, unknown to men, converse with each other during their sojourn on earth. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that man alone has a language; there are indeed many kinds of voices heard upon earth, and not one of them is without signification. The songs and twitterings of the bird's are responsive; animals converse and doubtless understand each other's utterances; probably the animals and birds whom you have domesticated regard your speech as unintelligible as their mode of expression is to you, until you have educated them to understand you measurably. Lower creatures than man not only speak with each other, but worship their superiors; it is only natural that everything shall pay homage to that which is above it. If nothing is above you, if your power and wisdom are infinite, if you know all there is to be known and can do all that can possibly be done, if nothing can ever thwart your purpose, if you are completely master of every possible situation, then, and only then, are you justified by reason in refraining from the acknowledgment of a superior power.

We have recently endeavored to explain to you somewhat the reasons why certain men and nations have worshiped foolish, unmerciful and unjust deities. They admired simple brute force; they were fascinated by despotic power, and the attributes of the spirits who were their gods were their own favorite attributes magnified. As the spirit-world holds every variety of character and attainment; as the two worlds, the physical and the spiritual, are indissolubly united, it affords us no cause for marvel when we discover that every lord, god, angel or demon adored by any one has been a real spirit; imperfectly understood, perhaps not thoroughly revealed, but still a real being, a fact forming the basis of a spiritual romance. All writers of works of fiction deal with living personages, with real characters. Read any novel you please and you will find that the book is a mirror in which are reflected the author's visible and invisible companions and acquaintances; and if his or her experience has been at all like your own, yours also.

Myths have all a foundation in reality; stars and suns, moons and comets, signs of the zodiac, all exist; nature is everywhere peopled;

spiritual worlds exist veiled in outer semblance, and no matter how wild and weird the imaginings of untaught people, no story is so strange or improbable that it is totally a fabrication. To eliminate fact from fancy, to discriminate between legend and biography, between exact history and romance, may be the very serviceable work of the scholar of to-day; but the realm of imagination and poesy will ever hold something dear and true to the heart of man, even though no material cause can be assigned for the occurrence of presumably supernatural events. Read the lives of the saints, and you probably cannot endorse every tale told by Baring Gould, Allan Butler, or any other Catholic or High Church author, but the extraordinary incidents related are not simply the product of untutored imagination; behind the screen of legend lies the living world of spirit. If man can control his own body perfectly, there is no possible scientific objection to the stories told of men and women making friends with the most savage beasts; wolves, bears, lions, serpents. All are inferior to yourselves. So long as their distinguishing traits, found also in men, are uppermost in man; so long as the spirit has failed to subdue the animal nature, these creatures have power to prey upon human life. They cannot be held in check by the power of man's arm, but his intelligence and affection can overcome all their savagery, and transform man's bitterest foe into his powerful ally and bosom friend. Animals yield every day more and more completely to man's expanding intelligence, while his physical power is no match for theirs. Fire-arms, for instance, are an expression of human genius. Animals, not possessing sufficient genius, can invent no weapons wherewith to cope with man's attack upon their liberties and life; but if the weapon—the result of mind—is so powerful, what say you to the absolute power of mind itself? If you can, by will-power, psychologize a human sensitive, surely your dogs and horses, your oxen are psychologized or they would not do your bidding. Matter is no match for mind, though through material agencies alone can mind manifest its power outwardly.

Man's religious instincts are born of his dependence upon a power higher, mentally and spiritually, than himself. Can you worship the groveling and revengeful gods of some of the Old World nations? Can you bow before the shrine of any reputed saint, unless you see something in the character of that saint which uplifts you? As long as there are men and women inferior to others they will worship their superiors. As we worship the higher and strive to reach up to it we are elevated, morally and intellectually. The distinction between true and idol worship is the difference between homage paid to a superior power and servile

obedience rendered to an inferior. All worship is true for you if it lifts your thoughts and exalts your life. If Jesus represents a higher phase of life than your own, you may sing and pray to him with profit, because the very thought of larger love, more unsullied truth, more absolute justice than your own, will lead you to emulate and follow in the lead of higher souls. Hero-worship is not to be despised; there is a danger attaching to the carrying of it to excess, but is not everything dangerous unless wisely regulated? Washington, Wellington, Nelson, Lincoln; these men stand out conspicuously on the pages of Anglo-Saxon history. Their bravery and integrity you must admire, but they are neither impeccable nor infallible. Worship them with the worship of *latria*, the highest kind of worship, including the absolute surrender of yourself to them, and you are idolators; they become your snares and curses; they dwarf your intellect and fix finite limits to progression beyond which you cannot pass. Worship them merely with respect and esteem; criticise even while you bow reverently before loftier attainment, and the manifestation of their failings, instead of disheartening or degrading you, will help you to avoid the dangers which imperilled their moral safety, and assist you wonderfully in rising superior to their weaknesses.

Moses, Solomon, David, and other Old Testament heroes are strange combinations of strength and weakness, virtue and vice. To hold them up to the world as examples in all things, as paragons of perfection; to say that any one of them is a man after God's own heart, a pattern which we must all copy, is to make of them dangerous pitfalls and precipices in humanity's onward march; but to calmly review their lives, to acquaint yourselves, so far as possible, with the condition of their times, and perceive how much good they accomplished in defiance of multitudinous obstacles, is to find them valuable helps in your own struggle against the vices of our own times, and the weaknesses incidental to present developments. Not one man or any number of men should be regarded as the ideal attained; not one or any number of exemplars or Saviours should be viewed in the light of the finality of God's revelation; all are but stepping-stones; the very highest are still pursuing an onward way. To worship any blindly, to accept any teachings as infallible because they are the teachings of an illustrious sage, is to be guilty of a grave error.

We have many times been taken to task by Christians for denying too much, and by iconoclasts for affirming too much; but in the utterance of the truth, as we perceive it, in the candid expression of honest conviction, we can afford to smile at hostility, and go on our way, rejoic-

ing in the possession of an approving conscience. Our opposers are, no doubt, quite as honest as ourselves, and their opinions are worthy of respectful attention, as are the opinions of every candid person; but to be forever answering objectors, to be incessantly annoyed by criticisms, would be to use up valuable time and energy in very unprofitable work. Some people cannot see, and we are foolish indeed if we quarrel with them for not doing what they are unable to do. Some men will not see; some are like the deaf adder in the Psalms—they stop their ears, lest haply they may hear something that shall induce them to change their old opinions; as they love theory more than fact, opinion more than revelation, and are not seeking light, an appeal to them is useless.

An old proverb says, "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise"; if an ignorant state is, in the estimation of any, a blissful one, it is not to be supposed that they will seek to exchange a blissful certainty for an uncertainty. If any minds are for the present completely satisfied with the cold negations of materialism; if its frigid theories are warm enough for them, it is not improbable that intellectual snows and ice are as congenial to some minds as are the polar regions to certain animals and men. The reindeer cannot abide the heat of Ceylon, while the dweller in the fragrant isle of spice and beauty would perish with cold almost instantly were he transported to Greenland. Prof. Tyndall, by no means a poor authority, has stated that his researches have convinced him that religious ceremonials are indigenous in certain climates and kinds of organisms. He argues that if you feed a boy on oat-meal and a little whiskey, and let him grow up amid mists and mountains, the probabilities are that Scotch Presbyterianism will be congenial to his tastes; on the other hand, bring up a child on fruits, light wines, and the general diet of Spaniards or Italians; expose him to sunny skies, let him breathe the warm air of Southern Europe or South America, and the Roman Catholic religion, with its multitudinous forms and ceremonies, will be naturally attractive to him.

Whatever the difference in doctrine between Catholicism and Buddhism, it is a well authenticated fact that Catholic and Buddhist ceremonies are so nearly identical that Jesuit missionaries, visiting Asia some centuries ago, could not account for the forms attending Oriental worship other than in two ways: one of their explanations was this, that the devil had made a burlesque of Christianity in heathen lands that he might the more readily lure souls to destruction; the other was that Christians must have mingled with Orientals long ago, and left behind them customs and traditions which the Asiatics have incorporated into their systems of faith and worship. The latter theory

is untenable, as the Vedas are certainly older than the Bible, and the history* of India far lengthier than that of the Jews and Christians. Moreover, it can be satisfactorily proved to every student that the sacerdotal robes, double choirs, incense, and other forms and articles of devotion common alike to Buddhism and Romanism, were employed in Asia centuries before the commencement of the present era.

One fact is certainly worthy of notice, and that is, that in warm countries ceremonial worship springs up spontaneously, and cannot be uprooted; but ceremonies are not religion, any more than garments are men. Different men dress differently, owing to difference in constitution, taste and climatic influences to which they are exposed. You cannot import the fashions of India into England; the climate will not allow of their being adopted. Furs are as useless in India as gauze is out of place in Lapland. Food must also be adapted to climate and constitution, or it becomes an injury instead of a blessing.

When we all are as sensible in the view we take of religious and intellectual needs and supplies as we are in the attitude we assume toward physical requirements, intolerance will die, bigotry will cease, and unity prevail where now discord makes of earth a hell. Let us be as forbearing with those who differ from us in their cry for mental and spiritual food as we are with those who need a different physical diet, and then shall we see how utterly impossible it is for all souls and minds to eat from one dish; and just as we are willing that one of our friends should eat fish, while another prefers meat, and a third fruit and vegetable diet only, we shall be willing that in the coming church all shall be fed with that peculiar food their natures instinctively crave; milk for babes, stronger food for adults, is ever offered by wise spiritual providers.

There are some who cannot live without being members of some religious society; they are not strong enough to stand alone; they will fall by the wayside faint and weary if no ark is provided for them. The fellowship, the home-like associations connected with organized effort are to them essentials. Take away existing churches and provide them with no substitute, and they will at once endeavor to rebuild those you have taken down. The friends of Ingersoll may be correct when they assert that he who plucks up weeds is doing a useful work, even though he plants no seed in the cleared soil; certainly so, provided there is seed yet to be planted; but where is the farmer who would take the trouble to clear ground and let it lie waste? If the work of demolition be but a prelude to that of reconstruction, the idol-breaker is a very useful person; but if there be nothing beyond clearing the ground, if there be no prospect of a future

harvest, the work of uprooting weeds is well nigh profitless toil.

*The work of a true religious organization is to establish something definite; we must build on affirmations; we can erect no stable edifice on the sliding sand of what we do not believe. Creeds are essential; but creeds which are limited and stationary, beyond which there is no possible progression, have led to fiery persecutions and every species of inhumanity recorded and unrecorded by historians. Who is there in this assembly who would object to say he believed in the truth of the assertions made in repeating the multiplication table? Have you any objection to saying you believe that twelve multiplied by twelve makes one hundred and forty-four? The assertion is but the announcement of a perfectly-well-authenticated fact, of the truth of which you are all completely satisfied. As credible and rational in your estimation as are these arithmetical statements, should be every affirmation in your creed. Because you progress, you will never outgrow a truth; you may discover other and additional truths, but as no amount of mathematical study can ever lead to a denial of the multiplication table, so no added discoveries in spiritual science can ever disprove a once thoroughly-authenticated fact.

Ages ago, long before priests, books or churches came into existence, the human soul revealed itself. God was discovered by men; spirits made themselves manifest to human sense and understanding; immortal life revealed itself as the heritage of an immortal being. These revelations made unto men through a variety of natural agencies, some of them superhuman indeed, others purely physical, resulted in the crystallization into organic form of the deductions resulting from these discoveries. These deductions, being the highest possible deductions in the age of their first appearance, served the useful purpose of paving the way for higher and more far-reaching conclusions. The law of Moses has been wisely designated by Paul, a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. The Mosaic code was preliminary to the Christian, and Christian legislation itself is no finality, so far as its form and execution goes.

The great Galilean teacher says, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill," yet he repeals many Hebraic commands; but is there not a vast difference between the law in the singular and the laws in the plural number? The one law which every human being is morally bound to respect, has been variously interpreted and revealed by men in various ages of the earth's progress. The laws are the outgrowths of the law; and each manifestation of the law is a law, every law being an approximation toward a perfect exposure of the law. So with God and the gods: the gods are partial expres-

sions of God; lives are manifestations of a portion of Life. Ingersoll may demolish the worship of the gods of antiquity, but God is as far beyond him as the sun is beyond the child who cries for it and wishes to possess and do as he will with it. The God of pure Theism can never be reached by any species of atheistic attack, while the gods are only fallible human spirits at the best, adorned with robes fashioned by superstition and fear.

If we analyze religious belief we shall quickly perceive that all incompleteness, aggressiveness and falsehood in creeds, grows out of their limitations. The Calvinist declares that God loves all his elect, and has chosen them from all eternity to share with him unending felicity. There is an affirmation, and a perfectly true one; but the affirmation is too small to shut out a negation which is a frightful error. The negation is: God does not love those who are not his elect. This negation, against which almost every truly great theologian protests, is the outcome of fixing limits to the love of the Infinite. Now, who are the elect? The elect are simply those qualified to do a special work. No more precious are they in the sight of the Eternal than all other souls; they are elected to certain places because of their fitness to fill certain positions with dignity and honor. Twenty scholars may receive instruction in a class; they are all called to prepare for an examination. One is chosen out of them all as the successful candidate; not because that one is any more moral than the other nineteen; not because the teacher or examiner loves him more than all the others; but simply because he is the only one who is competent to fill the niche vacant. The others are not punished, hated or disgraced; the knowledge they have earned will surely be valuable to them in some walk in life; but they are not chosen to occupy a position they are not qualified to fill.

Enter the spirit realm and ask of the wisest souls you encounter concerning the doctrine of election, and they will tell you that some are born for one office and some for another; but all, being equally faithful, are equally honored and equally happy. If we admit the existence of a perfectly loving Deity, who is infinite, then, fixing no limit to the divine love, we can find no room in the universe for divine hate or vengeance. Infinite wisdom precludes the possibility of folly in the divine conduct. From a human standpoint God's acts may appear foolish and unkind; but as we draw nearer to the divine wisdom we shall find that God's ways were only inscrutable to us because of our folly and shortsightedness. Some persons argue from this that such doctrines as total depravity, everlasting torment, etc., can be accepted on these grounds; that it is a satisfactory answer to all objectors to say that God's ways are above ours,

and that in his wisdom he can see the rectitude of what appears to us as wanton cruelty. Such an argument is as utterly inadmissible as the doctrines you who believe in an angry God ask us to endorse, are below us, inferior to us, beneath our reason instead of above it. The attributes necessary in God to make such a doctrine a truth, are attributes belonging to barbaric men; attributes outgrown with civilization; hence the doctrine is born in an unenlightened age, and outgrown as man improves.

You cannot outgrow justice, love, mercy, wisdom; these increase as humanity advances; but hate, anger, vengeance, partiality, not only can be, but actually are being and have been outgrown by mortals. While ascending the hill of life, whenever we find a doctrine insulting our intellects, paining our consciences, and asking us to stoop to it instead of rise to it, we may safely relegate the dogma to the region of effete superstitions. Every superstition is, however, at worst but a caricature of a fact. Hell, with all its horrors of undying flame, is literally found in the bowels of the earth by modern geologists; volcanic eruptions, boiling springs even in the most northerly latitudes, as well as the increasing temperature of the earth, the further we descend into its bosom, lead us to infer that a literal lake of fire is really under our feet; but that it is gradually cooling off, and is certainly not destined to afford an everlasting habitation for any members of our race. The day of final doom, when the elements are to melt with fervent heat, and the earth to be utterly destroyed by fire, is not the result of imagination merely, as geology and astronomy lead us to conclude that the destiny of this globe is, first, to reach its zenith and become perfect, and afterwards be swallowed up in the breast of its great fiery ancestor, the sun; while the new heavens and new earth which are to arise, phoenix-like, from its ashes, are none other than the new forms which nature will assume; nothing ever being destroyed.

The scientific origin of religious faiths is an interesting and profitable study, and should lead us to be careful in discriminating between the true and the false in our treatment of existing beliefs. There is a residue of truth in all the existing theologies, and to liberate this truth from the bondage of superstition, born of fear and tyranny, is the true work of the builders of the Church of the Future. In days of old, when a few priests were the only men of education, it was very easy for the church to monopolize all authority, and sway men's minds and bodies, as it employed for its own purposes all the information it possessed. But even during Christian centuries, the church has frequently been the depository of the arts, music, painting, sculpture, inventive genius, architecture; all have been fostered within monastery

cells, and those strange men who have withdrawn from the busy world to the hermit's cave, have bequeathed to this generation rich legacies of literature and art. The one fatal mistake made by the church is that it has placed under its ban all progression outside of its own enclosures, and for this cause is now dying, surely even though slowly, a natural death. Revivals may galvanize it into temporary vigor, but it is doomed, even as Judaism was doomed to vacate its throne on the introduction of Christianity.

Judaism, you may say, yet lives; certainly it does in two forms: antiquated, fossilized Judaism lives as a relic of the past, losing its hold more and more, even upon the affections of Jews themselves. Modern, progressive Judaism lives to outgrow the narrowness of the ancient faith, and while its pure and beautiful Monotheism, and its sweet recognition of the nearness of the faithful ~~degraded~~, commend it to this generation as a superior religion, to Orthodox Christianity it is fast merging into Theism. The Jewish Temple on Fifth avenue, New York, is almost a Theistic church. True, the services are conducted partly in Hebrew, and are held on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, instead of on Sundays as in Christian churches; the hymns sung and the sermons preached in that imposing edifice, are worthy of a place in the service of the most enlightened congregation of truth-seekers who meet in the search for truth, refusing to recognize any one system as the repository of the whole of the truth humanity has received.

Here in Boston among ourselves we need consolidation; we need to become a society recognized by the law, so that we can hold property and be acknowledged as a permanent institution. We can fill a place not filled by any other society, and this without affecting injuriously any existing organization. It is for you, as the result of all that you have heard and done during the past three years and over, to put into permanent, practical form, the spiritual fraternity which has long since been established here. There are spiritual centres on the earth in various countries and cities; here in Boston there are several. We have no desire to blend them all into one, as all spirits do not need precisely similar ministrations. We can throw open our doors to the public and invite in all who wish to join us, to become members of our organization, but unless persons are impressed, inspired to join with us, their presence would have a disintegrating and distressing effect. All true religious societies must be framed in obedience to the command: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law." Mutual help we all feel the need of, and in a true fraternity every individual must have his own work to do, and realize his own place in

the fabric which needs many parts to form a whole.

Quite recently Dr. Miner has been opening his church for temperance meetings on Sunday afternoons. These have been well attended, and have done much good in calling the attention of the public to the great perils to society resulting from the present extensive traffic in intoxicating liquor; but would not Dr. Miner, and other ministers, be doing a yet greater good work were they not only to throw open their churches for addresses advocating temperance, but also uncloseth them every day for the purpose of affording a pleasant and much-needed resort for homeless persons who are attracted into the brilliantly lighted liquor saloons, the churches being barred against them? The churches are said to be houses of God, while the drinking saloons are said to be houses of Satan. If this is so, is it not poor policy on the part of those who claim to be commissioned of God to save men from the clutches of the evil one, to leave his houses open all day and every day, and close up the temples of God except on Sundays, and occasionally for a prayer or conference meeting or lecture during the week? Are there not thousands of respectable, good-meaning young men and women who are absolutely homeless in our great cities? A small room in a third-rate boarding house is all their means will allow of their calling their own. To remain in this room every evening is a very cheerless prospect. Every one's means will not allow of their visiting places of amusement where there is an entrance fee, therefore let the churches open their doors every evening freely to all, and thus afford the public refining amusement. The influence of the churches will then be practically felt as a great power for good in the land, redeeming the people not only from the evils of intemperance, but of other pernicious habits.

Let the basis of an organization be a spiritual assembly of kindred minds already working in harmony on the spiritual plane. Let these combine to form a society whose chief operations shall consist in practical endeavors to utilize knowledge for the good of the great human family.

We will, in closing, give you a brief outline of our creed. We think it is sufficiently definite to form a basis of united effort, and at the same time elastic and comprehensive enough to allow ample room for unlimited growth and freedom of opinion.

We believe in a perfectly good God whose nature and will are revealed through nature and its laws. We believe that the only true worship of God consists in cultivating all our moral, intellectual and physical powers, with a view to becoming all that we possibly can become, so that our influence may be exerted for good

upon the largest possible number of our fellow-beings. We believe that the search for truth is the highest occupation of the human mind, and that truth is most readily found while we are engaged in practical efforts for the betterment of the condition of others. We believe that this life is only a stepping-stone to a higher life, and that that life beyond is a natural continuation of the life that now is; that in that life we shall receive all we have earned, all we deserve, and nothing more or less. We believe that all the talents and sympathies of the human mind and heart increase, and find ample scope for exercise in the spirit-world, and that our friends departed lose no interest in our welfare by dying to the flesh, but are vitally interested in our

welfare and use every available means for blessing us, and demonstrating to us their existence. On all speculative points we allow the utmost latitude to every individual, as we believe obedience to conviction constitutes true religion, which is a life and not a creed. Uniting on this basis, we pledge ourselves to employ faithfully every available means for enlightening and comforting our brethren; and hope our lives may justify our adoption of Thomas Paine's motto: "To do good is our religion."

We must reserve all elaboration of methods of usefulness for another occasion, contenting ourselves to-day with having, though very incompletely, outlined our vast and far-reaching theme.

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THE ORIGIN, HISTORY AND MEANING OF THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

· IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1881.

All the world is rejoicing. Nature has commanded us to be glad on this joyful day. She has herself instituted the Christmas, as she has indeed instituted all the festivals in the calendar which outlive theological and national changes, and remain dear to the hearts of men wherever civilized beings are to be found.

Festivals may be divided into two great classes—the natural and the ecclesiastical. The natural are always observed, no matter how current opinions may change with the lapse of ages. The ecclesiastical are only observed by those who are attached to certain customs and beliefs. Whenever the ecclesiastical are, however, built upon the natural, the church may lose its hold upon the minds of the populace, priestly injunctions may be disregarded, but the base on which the festival rests holds it up in spite of waves of aggressive skepticism; and, divested of its supernatural garments, undorned by aught save its own native purity, it remains as a blessing to all people, and continues to be observed even by those who are avowedly the sworn foes of ecclesiasticism in all its varied forms.

When speaking to you a short while ago on Natural and Revealed Religion, and reviewing the present attitude of Rev. O. B. Frothingham toward revealed religion, we took occasion to remark that natural and revealed religion are in their essence identical, as there is only one kind of true religion, and this lies at the root of every so-called religious system. The Ethnic, Archaic, and Catholic Religions of the world are all founded upon something solid. Superstitions and idolatries are like barnacles attached to a rock, parasites twining round a tree, or mud bespattering and concealing an otherwise

beautiful picture or wall. The barnacle is not the rock, the parasite is not the tree, the whitewash is not the fresco; but these excrescences and attachments oftentimes so completely disfigure and conceal the realities beneath them that passers-by and casual observers are unaware of the reality, as they gaze only upon the veil which hides it. It is even so with religious festivals and traditions: every legend has a foundation in a real natural, though misunderstood, occurrence; every myth is founded on a reality; every ceremonial observance is the relic of some older custom that originated somewhere with some one who understood how to minister to some felt need in human nature.

We have to do to-day with one of the most interesting, perhaps the most interesting of all the annual feasts observed in Christendom. Christmas comes to us new every year, with such novel freshness as leads us to feel as though we had never kept Christmas before, and at the same time it comes to us as a dear old friend with whom we are intimately acquainted, but whom we have not seen since twelve months ago. No sooner does this old friend get out of his carriage at our door and make himself at home in our parlor, than we feel as though the past had all come back to us; as though our friend had never been away; and yet there is such a fund of new joy in his presence that, while all things have become old, everything at the same time has been made new.

How wonderfully are all things made new in this world every morning. We can never grow tired of watching the sunrise; never become wearied of the sweet voices of the birds as they sing their matin hymns; never weary of return-

ing springtime, because in everything there resides such an unfathomable depth of beauty, that every time we gaze upon one of nature's lovely exhibitions we actually see something new to us. It may have always been there, but we never realized its presence before. Christmas Day is the true New Year's Day; it is the birthday of the sun. It is also nature's feast of the resurrection, as, after the sun has been apparently dead and buried three whole days, he rises victorious from his tomb on Christmas morning, proclaiming to all the world that he has never died, but only that our eyes and our earth have been turned away from him, while he has been shining brightly all the time, and actively blessing other parts of the earth, even while we have failed to rejoice in his immediate beams. Has it never struck you how wonderfully the law of compensation rules in all parts of the earth? In northern latitudes, where the sun seems absent for the greater part of the year, in the summer he seems unwilling to retire at night, even for a few hours. Oh! these beautiful long summer evenings, so enjoyable in Scotland! what do the Hindus know about them? Their days are nearly of the same length all the year round. At the equator the sun rises at six every morning, all through the year, and sets at six regularly every evening. As we draw nearer to the poles we have less of the sun on some days in the year, and more of the sun on others; and in the far north, where he hides himself for several months at a time, the beautiful aurora borealis, or northern light, gilds the winter with a splendor fully equal to that of the brightest summer day.

The longer we live, the more we witness and endure, the more absolutely certain do we become of the existence of a principle in nature of perfect equity, which we call God, signifying the absolutely and infinitely good. The ancients were very rational as well as poetical in their sublime idea of the Infinite source of all things. To them God was a great Central Sun, originator of all worlds and systems, from whom every planet derived its life. Astronomy clearly teaches us that our sun is only one of many, and that it is by no means a sun of the first magnitude. As Earth, Venus, Jupiter, and all the other planets, revolve around the centre of this system, as satellites or moons revolve around the planets respectively, so does our sun, in company with many others, revolve around a far larger and more powerful sun, whose child it is, as this earth is the child of this luminary. The ancients not only knew that the worlds were in motion, not only knew fully as much as modern scientists know of the position of the heavenly bodies, but they also, aided by planetary and other wise teaching spirits, recognized the fact that every world in space either had been, was then, or would be,

inhabited. They knew that different orbs represented various degrees of spiritual as well as physical attainment, and very naturally fixed the abode of the God of the earth, or its Guardian Angel, in the sun. The powerful and regnant spirit who controlled the earth they called Osiris, or the eye of day, and to him they paid their praises when they worshipped the sun, his dwelling-place and symbol.

Among the many remarkable and magnificent remains of ancient architecture, no one monument is half so eloquent in its majestic form as the great Pyramid of Gizeh, aptly termed "a miracle in stone." This marvelous structure has been designated by turns a storehouse, a tomb, and a temple. It is all three: it is a storehouse indeed, not for provisions and merchandise in days of famine consequent upon overflows of the Nile, but for spiritual and scientific truths, embodied, concealed, and yet revealed to all eyes who can read the mystic language of form as expressed in solid masonry; it is a tomb for the great King Cheops, who gave the land whereon it stands, and whose remains are interred within its mystic precincts; it is a temple, both of science and religion, dedicated to astronomical research as well as to direct spiritual investigation, as its form and entrances distinctly prove. Twice every year the sun rested upon its apex and illuminated its entire face; once in the springtime ere the sun went forth on his triumphal journey through the summer signs, and once in early autumn, ere the monarch of the skies passed through the wintry signs under the reign of the Dragon or Scorpion of the skies. Under the veil of astronomical allegory, the Egyptians always hid their spiritual knowledge.

Solar worship originated with the earliest inspired men the earth ever knew, as inspiration and enlightened reason always lead men to look upward, while carnality leads the eye to gaze downward. One of the distinguishing features of man is that he is an erect, upward-gazing animal, while inferior creatures tread the earth with their gaze downward. It is proverbial of an honest man that he has an upward expression, while the evil-disposed look toward the ground, as though afraid to encounter the eye of Heaven. The majesty of shining and revolving worlds, the immensity of space, the grandeur of the sky—these glories are ever attractive to the aspiring student. No one study probably can do for man, as an aspirational creature, one-half that astronomy can. Astronomy and religion have always been united; we cannot separate the religion of the East from its astronomy, and while there is much truth in the doctrine that Christianity is only a perpetuation of solar worship, those who, like the celebrated French writer, Dupuis, and others, deny that such a man as Jesus ever lived,

are unsupported in their assertions either by history or common sense. This day, Christmas, is truly the birthday of the sun, and also the feast of his resurrection, as we have before stated. Five thousand years ago men trusted in the risen Osiris as multitudes to-day rely upon the ascended Jesus for salvation. Hundreds of millions of Orientals take refuge in Buddha, while they know nothing of Christ. A knowledge of an historical personage cannot be necessary to salvation if there be any justice in the laws of Nature, or all would have a knowledge of that personage, and it would be their own fault if they rejected his claims.

Christmas certainly did not originate with the birth of the great Galilean seer, though it cannot be doubted by intelligent students of history that about 1881 years ago a remarkable teacher was born in Palestine, who left so great an impression on society that Ernest Renan, called a skeptic by all evangelical Christians, remarks that without Jesus of Nazareth human history would be incomprehensible. According to the New Testament records Jesus must have been born in the warm season of the year, certainly not in the winter, as, though Judea is a warm country, the flocks are never left outdoors at night in the winter season, and we are very plainly told that the angels who heralded his birth first appeared to shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks by night. In winter time the flocks would have been safely housed at night; in summer they were left outdoors, with men to guard them from the approach of ravenous beasts, and to tend them lest they strayed beyond recovery. In the early Christian centuries the Fathers of the church confessed that they did not know when Jesus was born. They kept Christmas at various seasons of the year, until, by common consent, it was decided to observe the nativity of him whom they called the Sun of Righteousness on the day when all peoples were rejoicing in the birth of a new year, Christmas day being really New Year's Day; January 1st being in truth only the first day of the first calendar month of the new year; or, as it was once regarded, the first day of the eleventh month, the civil year commencing March 1st, March being the month in which winter ends and spring commences. The names of the months are ample proof of the truth of this latter assertion. September is derived from the Latin *Septem*, meaning seven; October from *Octo*, eight; November from *Novem*, nine; and December from *Decem*, ten. You are all aware that December 21st is the shortest day in the year, and that the length of day appears to remain stationary during the three following days, Dec. 22d, 23d, 24th; then, on the 25th, the sun is newly born, the days begin to lengthen, and a new year has been ushered in. In the Christian calendar, Dec. 21st

is dedicated to the apostle Thomas, who entertained doubts concerning the resurrection of the Master, as on that day the ancients were doubtful whether the sun-god would successfully cope with his winter adversaries, and reappear as their king, or succumb in his encounter with the hosts of darkness.

The early Christians did not immediately decide upon continuing to observe feast days already held universally sacred, but after labored and fruitless endeavors to arrive at exact dates, the early Christians decided to celebrate the leading events in the history of the founder of their system at those seasons of the year, and on those days, when the solar worshippers and others around them were keeping holiday in commemoration of leading incidents in the lives of their gods and goddesses. True it is that about the time when Christianity began to spread over Europe, solar worship was not the avowed religion of the European nations, among whom the Christians went; but, be this as it may, the religions of Judea, Greece, Rome, Persia and other lands, were all offshoots from one great parent stem—the astronomical religion of India, a land whose traditions and monuments are older than those of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldaea, or any other celebrated portion of the eastern hemisphere.

On this bright and happy day, when young and old rejoice together at the birth of a saviour, it may be justifiable, and even necessary, to distinguish between myth and historic truth, between the real and the fabulous in theology; but to those who, with the enlightened understanding of the spirit, can peer deeply within and below the crust of "old wives' fables," the soul of all traditions is ever as far superior to popular conceptions of it as the loftiest ideal in the soul of the artist is infinitely grander than the picture he has painted, or the bust he has chiselled into form. Where is there anything in the outward world fully satisfying to man's spiritual nature? Man has been called, by some men of note, a melancholy and discontented being. While much of sorrow results from a sense of failure in the attempt to do one's duty, a large share of the disappointed or unsatisfied feeling, common to the very greatest and noblest of men, arises from the fact of the soul dwelling in a spiritual as well as in a physical realm. The world of spirit so far transcends in loveliness the world of matter that the outer earth, no matter how beautiful, is inadequate to fully satisfy the yearnings of the immortal occupants of these physical forms often erroneously looked upon as the men themselves.

Christianity, as a system of religion, is as inferior to the teachings attributed to Jesus in the four gospels as can well be imagined. Every one sees something to admire in the lovely ut-

terances of the holy Nazarene. Even Ingersoll, the great Agnostic orator, in his lecture, "What Must I Do to be Saved?" places a very high estimate upon Jesus as the leading character of the New Testament. One of the strongest objections to the Orthodox plan of salvation put forward by him is, that it is irreconcilable with the teachings of the reputed founder of the Christian system; for, while he does not demand biblical sanctions for his own conduct in any particular, he very justly contends that those who profess to be followers of Christ, should carefully follow his teachings, and frame their creeds and lives after his precepts.

It is very easy to say with truth that almost every great word and act attributed to Jesus may, with at least equal truth, be attributed to certain of his predecessors; also that his new commandment is only new to those who have never before been directly appealed to by the spirit of Love as the conqueror of all Evil; that the Paternoster is taken from the prayer of Hillel in the Jewish service, and the Golden Rule is found in sentiment certainly among the Arabians before the Christian era; but those who are acquainted with spiritual revelations know full well that truths are ever given to nations and individuals only as minds are able to bear them. A truth may be very old to you and quite new to some who have never before been familiar with it. The great success of a spiritual teacher depends, not so much upon his brilliancy or originality as upon his power to adapt his utterances to his hearers. All truth is worthless to an individual until such time as his mind is unfolded sufficiently to receive it.

The earth is gradually overrun with spiritual truth. In one age or period of history, Egypt is the centre of knowledge; at another time, China; then Persia; then Palestine; more recently, Europe and America. The mission of Jesus and his associates was to enlighten a people who had not yet become imbued with the principles of the highest morality; his teachings conflict with none of the sayings of the great seers of the Orient who have preceded him. Confucius pointed to his ministry as to a star which should arise in the West; and while the great Chinese philosopher touched the intellect of Asia, and gave soundest laws for the government of nations, the influence of such self-sacrificing souls as Gautama Buddha and Jesus was necessary to directly appeal to the hearts of men, and bring home to the affections the ethical code which otherwise only appeared before the intellect as a brilliant but inanimate spectacle. The peculiar beauty in the life of Jesus is the ineffable tenderness of that life; its utter self-abnegation, its absolute willingness to do all, dare all, and suffer all in behalf of humanity. If in such a history as that of

the life of Jesus men can see nothing more than a zodiacal myth; if Jesus is the sun, and his apostles the twelve signs of the Zodiac in their estimation, and that only, it must be because their own natures are so hard and blunted that a perfect man, throwing himself utterly into his work and blessing his race at the expense of his own life, has no charms for them.

Some critics are so far below Jesus that the existence of any one so pure and benevolent is, to them, an incomprehensible mystery. Beat upon serving self at all hazards, the philanthropist is, in their eyes, a myth, a hypocrite, or a lunatic; but to those who appreciate true benevolence, and are willing themselves to work disinterestedly for others, Jesus is no myth and no mystery; he is a simple man, whole-souled and true to every trust; not of necessity infallible or impeccable, but at the least (and that least is the greatest of all human attainments,) a man of spotless integrity and unswerving devotion to his sense of right. Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle: all of these and many other splendid Greeks had done their work and left their impress on society long before the lowly Jewish maid gave birth to the "desire of all nations"; but Mary's son fills an unique place in human history, and, fired by his example, more deeds of heroism have been performed than at the instigation of any other great name.

Three salient and very important facts need to be presented to those who are in doubt concerning the real existence of him whose birth all Christendom celebrates to-day, and thoroughly considered by them before they will find themselves in a position to decide intelligently for or against the doctrine of his actual personality. There are some who have a theory, who ride a hobby, and are striving to cut down every fact until it is small enough to fit their own conception of truth; to such we do not speak. As well present flowers to the man who closes his eyes and will not open them, and ask him to admire their beauty; of course with shut eyelids he cannot perceive them. Our words are not to those who value theory more than fact, but to those who love the truth more than all beside, and who wish to form a right judgment concerning all things.

To all truth-seekers we bring forward three witnesses who declare that Jesus is a man and not a myth. The first says as it is an historical fact that the early Christians were in doubt as to the time of the birth of Jesus, they must have intended to celebrate the birth of a man and not of the sun, as it could not have been a matter of doubt among any sane persons as to when it was right to celebrate the birth of the solar orb, all nations having unanimously agreed that the days begin to lengthen Dec. 25th, and this fact was patent to every casual observer. The second witness says, as

the author of "Art Magic" declares, it is impossible to account for the history of the period without admitting the fact of the existence of a great and good man similar to the Jesus of the gospels, and it is inconceivable that multitudes of men and women would have endured inconceivable tortures through their devotion to a myth. If you object that Roman historians make little or no mention of Jesus in their writings, and that the celebrated passage referring to him in the works of Josephus is an interpolation, we reply that this is not to be wondered at or considered as any evidence against his existence, it being well known that the Jews at that time were not an influential people. They were the vassals of the Romans, by whom they were looked down upon and treated with contempt. In addition to this it cannot be denied that the early Christians were a proscribed people, and Jesus, according to all traditions, filled no honorable place among the nobles of the world, but was an itinerant teacher and healer, surrounded by a crowd of common people who heard him gladly, while civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries stood afar off. Witness third says, on the testimony of the most exalted and intelligent and every way truthful spirits now communicating with the earth, you are assured that Jesus exists and holds an exalted place among the truly great in spirit-life. If some spirits know nothing about him, is their ignorance to be set up in opposition to the positive knowledge and affirmative statements of those who are at least their equals in all respects?

The absurd attacks made upon the doctrine of the real existence of Jesus to-day, are pitiable evidences of the degrading effects of a superstition. The present hatred of the Bible, the prevalent blind and bigoted hostility to the very name of Jesus, are the direct result of the degrading superstitions so long associated with the good old book and the majestic man. Reactions always set in when irrational and inordinate claims are made in behalf of any person or any thing. One extreme of human thought makes Jesus everything—God of gods and Lord of lords, the Supreme Creator and Preserver of the universe; the opposite extreme makes him nothing—a mere myth, a shadow, a fabrication of priestcraft. Truth always lies between extremes, and Jesus, calmly viewed by impartial minds, in the light of history and inspiration, is a man, good and true, pure and noble, but one of ourselves; born as we were, exalted by virtue of his own merits, as we shall be exalted if we are ever exalted at all. Remove the supernatural from Jesus, and he stands before us a brother, friend, helper, teacher; a saviour and redeemer in no other sense than all are saviours and redeemers who instruct men both by precept and example, by moral suasion and spirit-

ual force, to obey the laws of Nature so fully that their own souls may shine out through the windows of physical life, and illuminate all who cross their pathway. Strip Jesus of all theological trappings, and he remains to you, as all your great heroes remain, one of yourselves, invaluable because a practical power and example, which as Almighty God he never can be.

For ourselves what is the meaning of this Christmas festival? To all natural religionists, to all who read of God more from the pages of nature's boundless volume than from the inspired or uninspired words of any men, Christmas comes freighted with boundless promise; its bells do not ring out in vain when they call the people together to worship a new-born saviour. To some of you the churches, and even the Bible, may contain no Christ. In the opinion of some of you the voice of the spirit speaking in this later age has rung out the false and rung in the true; rung out the old and rung in the new; and with eyes and minds averted from the Christ who has been and who now is, you have looked for the Christ who is to be. This new Christ, this new saviour, comes to you in the form of a new year, filled with fresh golden opportunities for usefulness. This new year, born to-day, asks you to forget the things that are behind in your eagerness to press toward the things that are before. Joy, joy, a year is born, we may all sing, and this new year to us all may be a true saviour; but the new year, like the historic Christ, only offers to deliver us from our sins—not to take us to heaven on the merits of another, while we are yet in iniquity. "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." This is precisely what Jesus offered to do for the Jewish nation, but they would not accept the salvation the great teacher brought. The Evangelical Church to-day is offering the kind of salvation the Jews clamored for; a salvation antipodal to that which the great teacher offered them. They had clung with utmost tenacity to the letter of every prediction; they looked for a Messiah who should save them from their enemies by the sheer force of physical power; they expected their Messiah to become their King, and fight all their battles for them, until the Romans should be utterly discomfited, and they themselves the masters of all the wealth of the then civilized world. Jesus told them that moral reformation must precede national greatness, and that without national purity their fate was sealed, no matter what outside deliverers might attempt to do for them. Therefore, his bitterest denunciations were directed against those scribes and Pharisees who kept the people in a state of perpetual satisfaction with demoralization, so long as they gave tithes of their possessions, and thus enriched the priests and rulers.

Who can read the story of Greece without arriving at the conclusion that the absence of solid morality was the cause of the decline of the splendid civilization of that justly celebrated land? Art and literature were placed on the highest pedestals of honor; culture was at its height; but real principle, sterling integrity, was lacking. Immorality sapped the vitality of that illustrious land until its glory was lost in the after-majesty of the Romans, who, in their turn, fell utterly to ruin through social anarchy and impurity. Almost every prophecy was made to the Jews conditionally. Their great men told them what they could become, what they certainly *would* become, were they only faithful to the light. They were unfaithful; they lacked character, and hence they fell an easy prey to their enemies. Their last opportunity of amendment came to them in the person of Jesus and his immediate followers. The spectacle of the great teacher weeping over Jerusalem, is one of the most beautiful and affecting of all pictures ever presented to the human mind. It needed no special prophetic power to enable him to predict the destruction of Solomon's temple and a dispersion of the people. He knew that their rejection of the truth he lived to proclaim was the seal they themselves had set upon their own doom; and with more than an ordinary patriot's love of country, he wept bitterly over their downfall, even though he realized that to him it would bring no shame or loss. But into the very midst of the thick darkness of that eventful period in history there came a new light, the religion of the lowly Nazarene. The civilization carried far and wide by the Jews, wherever they wandered, brought to the world a new day, surpassing in splendor all previous days of human sojourn on earth.

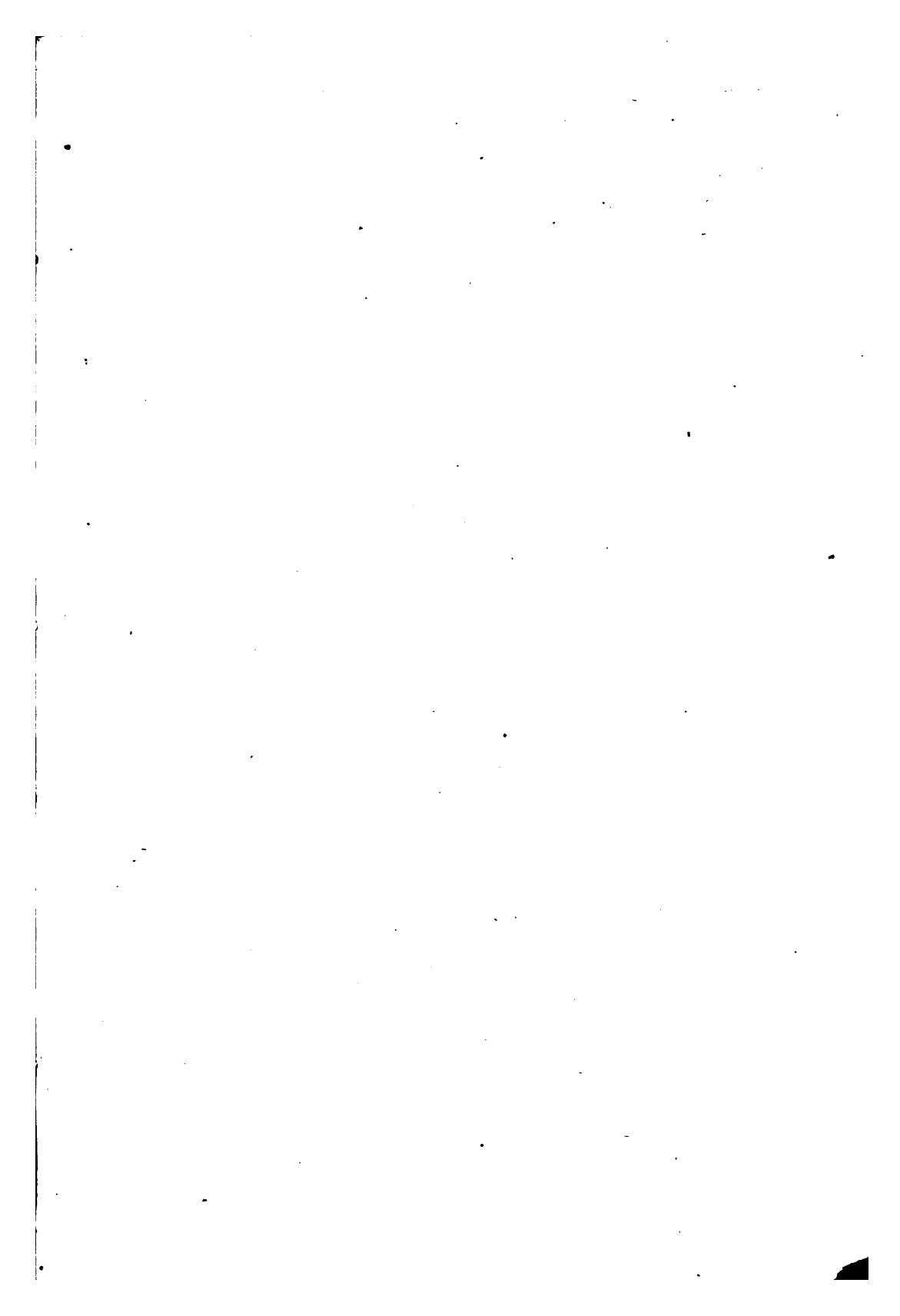
It is always darkest just before the dawn; the old proverb is everywhere and at all times true. When affairs become desperate they always begin to mend. The very pessimism which can only look upon the darkest side of life, is in itself a witness to the truth of optimism, for unless the world was really growing better men would not have sufficiently fine moral perceptions to realize that it was growing worse, while the very realization of the badness of an existing condition is the first step to its betterment. Mortification is accompanied by insensibility to pain. Physicians all admit that acute suffering in dangerous cases is far less dangerous than no sensation at all. Let us see an evil, let us believe it to be an evil, and we shall then set to work to try and remove it. You would never clean your houses unless something convinced you that they were dirty; and just as house-cleaning raises dirt, and for a time seems to make matters worse, without the agitation of the dust it would never be re-

moved. Some astrologers and others have spoken as though between 1880 and 1887 terrible malific influences exerted over the earth would occasion frightful pestilences, battles, murders and every form of disaster and distress. Malific influences are not at all needed to occasion seeming disasters. Good influences, the spirit of progress, will make herculean efforts to rid the earth of an incubus; and cutaneous eruptions very frequently manifest nature's efforts to rid the blood of its impurities, while it may be very unpleasant to bear the externalization of disease at the time when the malady is most conspicuous. Nature is a great homeopathist in one sense: she ever assists disease and calamity to come to a head, that when the crisis is past the man or nation may take a new lease of purer and higher life.

Oh! if there are any of you whose lives are sad and dark on this glad day; if the jubilant music, and the bright evergreens and flowers, and the smiling faces all around you grate harshly upon your blighted hearts, remember, oh, remember, we implore you, that the meaning of our rejoicing to-day consists in our recognition of nature's invariable method of causing a new light to shine out of the depths of chaos and darkness. Christmas, then, is the feast of the new birth, and the resurrection of light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, life out of death.

It has always been hard to account for the tradition that three days elapsed between the death and resurrection of the Christ, without looking to the sun for information. Only thirty-six or forty hours can pass from Friday afternoon to the dawn of Sunday morning; but here in midwinter, after three whole days of apparent burial, the victorious light-bearer of our system arises with healing in his wings, the beautiful midsummer constellation, Virgo, reappears with Bootes or Josephe, her consort, standing near, but not immediately at her side. And thus every year an infant light-bringer is born of the virgin of the skies, with Joseph for a foster-father, in the stable of Capricornus (the goat), the zodiacal sign for December. How intimately the material and the spiritual are ever blended in human experience. In all outward things, the inner is symbolized, and while all temporal things may ere long dissolve, the eternal and invisible remain forever.

Let the eternal spirit of love be born in your hearts to-day, and while you will profit by all that the great and good of past ages have done for the race, you will not need to be accurately informed concerning the history of bygone days ere you can enter into oneness with all that is really true and great, for a living Saviour will be born into your own lives, and the new Christ will be the spirit of truth reaching earth from the living sphere of ascended humanity.



THE NEW YEAR, ITS HOPES, PROMISES, AND DUTIES.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

INVOCATION.

Eternal and Infinite Spirit, our Father and our Mother God! Thou who pervadest immensity with thyself alone; thou who art essential purity, unbounded wisdom, unfathomable love, we praise thee on this bright and joyful day for all that we have, for all that we are, and for all that we hope to be. Whatsoever of celestial possibility lies latent within our souls, needs but to be fanned into a flame by the quickening breath of thine eternal spirit, ere it shall shine forth in purer radiance than earth can reveal. All that within us is of the earth earthy needs but to be purified by thine all quickening breath, ere it shall become a fitting dwelling-place for the angel of thy presence. Speak thou unto all of us to day; not from out the thunder-clouds of Sinai in voice which shakes the earth with fear, but in the still small voice of thy pleading spirit, which dwelleth within us all, and unites us eternally unto thee. The past, freighted with golden opportunities, has gone from us forever; its hours we may ne'er recall; but its influence is ours at this moment, its spirit abides while its form is dead. The year 1881 is alive, though unseen; it lives its life in this New Year whose birth we to-day celebrate, and which is what its predecessors have allowed it to become. Even so with all the heroes and heroines of days gone by: they not only lived, they live; they not only wrought, they are working now; their achievements are for us, their inspiration is our portion, our legacy, our New Year's gift. Oh! may we all upon this solemn, yet joyous occasion, awake to a vivid sense of our responsibilities as individuals and as a people. May we remember that all we do lives after us, and that in nature's great book of remembrance all actions, yea, every thought, is recorded in letters of living flame. May the Spirit of Truth, of Wisdom and of Love be our guide and counsellor through this untrod year, and may it be to us a veritable new-born saviour, whose birth augurs only blessing for us all. If sorrows come, if bereavements rob us of all that we cling to on the earth, may the immortal spirit cleave more closely to the unseen realities of heaven's enduring sphere; and thus may joys

and sorrows, failures and crowned hopes, births and deaths, lead us, through their wondrous ministry, nearer, our God, to thee, nearer to thee. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

To-day is New Year's Day. We commence this morning a new era in our history; a new page in the great book of life is this day presented to us unmarked with any character. Fair, white, pure as the falling snowflake, a new year is born out of eternity into time. Like the little infant, laughing and sobbing by turns on its mother's breast, it has yet revealed to us none of its potencies, its talents or its intentions. It is a newly-opened book; a fresh production from the author's hands. We are just beginning to read the preface, and are all on the tip-toe of anxiety to know what strange tale Time has to tell us in this his latest volume. All books and all men come to us with peculiarities altogether their own. There is much in them that we can neither mutilate nor improve. Independent of us they live their own lives and tell their own stories; but though largely independent of us, neither the man nor the book is devoid of susceptibility to our influence. The persons with whom we associate regulate their lives more frequently and largely than we are aware through our precept and example, while the spirit in which we approach a book, the manner in which we read it, the way in which we quote from it, affects in a great degree the influence it exerts upon ourselves and others.

The New Year to us may be likened to four things: a person of whom we yet know scarcely anything, and whose acquaintance we have yet to make; a child whose hidden powers and dispositions have yet to be revealed; a book

fresh from the press, which no one has yet read; and a blank sheet of paper on which we are to write an essay which shall live in its effects forever. The New Year, viewed in this four-fold way, comes to us both as a power outside of ourselves, destined to exert an influence upon us we cannot prevent, and also as a something which we have to mold and shape by our own industry. The year just closed is dead, and the world yet lives. It did not bring the end of the world, as many supposed it would, and yet the end of life in this sphere of existence came to a large number of representative people, as well as to an unusual number of ordinary citizens. The number of sudden deaths last year was remarkable. Everywhere funerals were frequent; memorial services the rule rather than the exception; obituary notices of celebrated personages occupied a large amount of space in our newspapers and magazines, and it does not strike us as likely that the year upon which we have entered will show a lower death rate. The year 1881 took from the earthly body "George Eliot," the celebrated novelist, whose works have inspired multitudes to higher living, while the private life of the gifted authoress was open to the severest criticism of those who are more inclined to pick flaws in an otherwise great life than to admire the real excellencies of that life. Everything seeks its affinity; every creature seeks society within the limits of its own species, and it needs but little logic to prove that the smallest minds always most readily take into account the littleness of their fellow beings, while the greatest souls are so fully occupied with admiring and cultivating the truly beautiful that they have little opportunity or inclination to dwell upon the defects of frail humanity.

While contemplating the inroads which the angel of transition has made in the ranks of the *literati* of our day we cannot forget Thomas Carlyle or Dean Stanley, two remarkably brilliant Englishmen, who have within the past twelve months been called to their home beyond the sepulchre. Thomas Carlyle, the brilliant essayist, who in 1849 sounded his trumpet of earnest thought, couched in piercing words, and carrying conviction to thousands upon thousands of thoughtful minds, has been aptly compared by many to a John the Baptist crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Like the great forerunner of Jesus, he was an agitator, an iconoclast, a revealer of secret sin. His call was for the nations to come to judgment. His nature was firm, uncompromising; very little of the sweetness of life pervaded his writings, especially his later ones; but throughout all his productions, his stern protest against soulless formalism, his zealous advocacy of the right as he beheld it,

lent an indescribable charm to all his essays in the eyes of resolute and conscientious men. Whatever he was, he was no sycophant; no mealy-mouthed panderer to the vices of the times, cloaking conviction under the mask of expediency. He did not pause to ask whether men would frown or smile, applaud or hiss, when they listened to his statements. He had a message to deliver and he meant to deliver it, in spite of all possible criticism and opposition. His utter disregard of other people's opinions made him a celebrity. Though sarcasm and cynicism sometimes converted his speech into wormwood and gall, he was unmistakably a prophet, not unlike some of those famous in Jewish history who scathingly denounced the iniquities of their age and land, sparing neither priest nor suppliant, king or beggar, in their fierce onslaught upon hypocrisy.

As unlike Carlyle as one could possibly be in many respects, and yet an earnest protestant against the wrongs of the times, stood Stanley, Dean of Westminster, pastor of one of the most influential of all the State churches in England. He was as fearless as Carlyle, as bold and vigorous in style and character; but his mission was to reveal Infinite Love; to rob men of hell, with all its horrors of quenchless fires and undying worms. To him was given the blessed task of trampling under foot all the doctrines of the churches which Christianity had transferred from barbarism; to give to the Jews their due; to write the history of the Jewish Church in plain English, and present men with a Christ who came to reveal a Father's love, not to appease eternal vengeance. Stanley's work in the Church of England was a marvelous one. Standing on the very pedestal of priestly power, elevated to the dignity of Dean of Westminster, one of the most honorable and influential positions possible to any clergyman, he trod under foot the maledictory clauses in the Athanasian creed; not only ignored the Calvinism of the Thirty-nine Articles, but positively denounced and denied it with as much vehemence as Ballou, Murray, or any of the early Universalist preachers of America could ever have displayed. Surely the influence of these two great men has done much to revolutionize the thought and expression, both of the press and the Church.

Another very noted man comes before us as we gaze upon the remarkable spirits whom 1881 has introduced into the world unperceived by mortal sense; we allude to Benjamin Disraeli, or Lord Beaconsfield. A more singular man has scarcely ever appeared on earth. A Jew by birth, bent on removing as far as possible the existing prejudice against his race, he began early in life to wield the pen with amazing grace and dexterity. "Vivian Grey," "Tancred," and many other of his early works, dis-

tinently portray the great struggle for freedom going on in the land; a struggle almost as deadly, though far less bloody, than the terrific strife which was needed to liberate millions of slaves from the galling yoke of bondage in this fair land. Disraeli, with all his vanity, egotism, time-serving and ambition, was a great writer, a great speaker and a great politician; and whatever exceptions may be taken to some of his ideas and to some portion of his behavior, none who have studied English history can deny, or even doubt, that he was one of the very powerful weapons employed by the invisible powers who rule the nations, in bringing freedom and justice to an oppressed and cruelly wronged people.

Pursuing our way yet further across the seas till we arrive in Russia, we cannot when there forget that the awful arm of Nihilism was, during 1881, outstretched to slay the Czar, the very Czar who had done so much for the Russian peasantry; a man who, though not elected by the people to represent them, was almost as universally beloved and esteemed by those who really knew him as was your own justly honored and much lamented Garfield. It is indeed terrible to trace the footsteps of Liberty, even while it is intensely encouraging to mark the way along which Freedom marches to her sure and certain victory. Nihilism is an aggressive, tyrannical and deceitful force; its weapons are cunning and craft; it bands its disciples together into secret societies, and lies in wait privately till it deals the fatal blow at its unsuspecting victim. It is a conspiracy against the Government; its spirit is vindictive, retaliative throughout; there is nothing straightforward and manly about it; it loves darkness rather than light, because its deeds are evil. There are men in America who, from the platform and through the press, eulogize and caress this hydra-headed monster. They speak of it as though it were the daughter of the goddess Liberty or the special herald of freedom, while it is a piece of infernal mechanism constructed to blast the lives of the innocent and the noble; and while it may be accounted for, and possibly excused, pretty much in the same way that the burning of Servetus by Calvin may be, on the ground that the persecuted and down-trodden are so degraded by the oppression to which they have been subjected that they readily become persecutors in their turn, to speak of Nihilism as anything but vile is to laud the assassin's act and deify the conduct of the murderer. The assassination of a ruler has too recently aroused the strongest feelings of the American people to indignation against so heinous and unprovoked a crime, to allow of this Russian viper being taken to your hearts and homes.

The year 1881 has taken from America her

newly-elected President, he upon whom she had centred many of her fondest hopes; yet out of the bitterness of her sobs she may give vent to feelings of thankfulness that she has learned much while she has suffered much; and though we utterly disclaim Guiteau's theory of a divine inspiration being the direct cause of his fatal deed, we cannot fail to believe that everything is overruled for good, and that a wise and beneficent intelligence oversees and foreknows everything that transpires in the universe. Garfield is happy, yea, triumphant, to-day. He is not injured—he asks not for vengeance upon his murderer. Is not America stronger and freer as the result of the trial through which she has passed? Has not a common sympathy in grief bound you closer to each other than you have ever been bound before? and can you not enter upon this new year with feelings of gratitude, even for the sorrow you have been called upon to pass through? We allude not only to the national loss, but, appealing to every individual in this large assembly, we ask each, Can you not, looking back upon the past year and upon the whole of your past lives, feel to acknowledge that bereavements and losses, cares and crosses, have been positively essential to the calling out of all the tenderest emotions of the human heart?

We cannot, in this hasty review of what 1881 has done in the way of removing to the higher life illustrious and representative men and women, omit one word in recognition of the inestimable service rendered to humanity by the great and good Universalist preacher, Dr. Chapin, so recently translated to the spiritual life. Through what long years has this noble soul ministered in New York and elsewhere to the spiritual needs of a vast company of hungering and thirsting souls. He was a great apostle of the love of God, in the Church and of it, and yet possessed of immense individuality. He rose into a personal and practical appreciation of the absolute power of goodness as the only positive power in the universe, to such an extent that he could gaze upon the most audacious criminal and behold in the man whose hands were deeply dyed in the blood of his fellows, a magnificent though terribly misdirected force which, some day, in some life, should be employed for good and in blessing only.

Passing out from the ranks of Spiritualism, and the literary world equally, Epes Sargent, the distinguished author and ripe scholar, has entered the ranks of the invisible hosts whose activities in behalf of humanity are ever increasing. For many years connected prominently with the Boston *Transcript*, and subsequently one of the most honored and respected of contributors to its pages, in his latest years he was actively engaged in editing and preparing for publication an Encyclopædia of Poetry,

a work commanding the respectful attention of literary persons everywhere. He was also the author of "Planchette, or the Despair of Science," "Proof Palpable of Immortality," and "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," and leaves behind him a record so irreproachable and scholarly that the world of letters will not longer deny that Spiritualists are numbered among the ripest scholars of the age. Prof. Zöllner in Germany, giving to the world "Transcendental Physics," has shown how wondrously material science and spiritual knowledge may blend, and how irrational is the assumption that to recognize the spiritual universe one must be blind to material facts.

A new spiritual year commences to-day, as well as a new civil one. This new year is filled with mightiest promise, with boundless hope; and to all toilers in the spiritual vineyard, let our words of encouragement ring out as a death knell to their fears, when we assure them that if they are but true to the work the angels have entrusted to their charge, this year will be to them a year of triumph over despair, and of victory over those many difficulties and hindrances which have so long and painfully hampered their operations. The way will be made easier for all earnest workers. As the atmosphere of the earth becomes more fully charged with refined, spiritual emanations; as more and more of the atoms composing the globe become humanized, human life in its highest forms will have less opposition to encounter. As the years roll on the planet passes under the control of higher and yet higher intelligences, the rulers of the earth being spirits who have once dwelt upon it, it being the destiny of all souls who have been embodied on earth to eventually rise superior to every material obstacle, and victoriously control matter while they have aforesaid been holden of it.

Jesus, rising on the third day from the dead, materializing and dematerializing in full view of his disciples, ascending to heaven, vanishing out of their sight forty days after, his reappearance after his resurrection, and his subsequent coming as a spirit simply, in the divine outpouring of wisdom at Pentecost, signifies the measure of attainment possible to a human soul whose earthly experiences are complete. The Great Teacher expired not until after he uttered those memorable words "It is finished." Buddha, in Asia, entered not into the rest of Nirvana until his earthly pilgrimage was complete. Paul declared that, after all his fierce warfare on earth, he had "finished" his course, and that henceforth there was laid up for him a crown of fadeless victory.

How many are there out of all the souls who have dwelt on earth who have been able to exclaim, "I have finished my course"? In nine hundred and ninety-nine instances out of every

thousand is not life incomplete even to its close? Do not the eyes of the dying turn longingly and lingeringly back to the scenes of their mortal labors, feeling that as yet their earth-life is unfinished? not with the backward glance of Lot's wife, who loves the city of destruction, with all its sensual pleasures, more than the spiritual state beyond, but rather with the eye turned back over the pages of life's record sorrowfully, because that record is incomplete. The soul feels, and often exclaims in the hour when it is about to be released from its decaying tabernacle, "Oh! that I had but another chance! Oh! that I might live my life over again; with my present experiences I should not make the mistakes I have already made." The soul feels and knows that it has not rendered to humanity on earth all that it is capable of rendering. It knows full well that it has within itself manifold powers of usefulness not yet expressed; and shall the opportunity for using these powers be forever denied it? Ah, no; the soul shall find that death does not sever it from the loved of earth; death does not cripple or remove its powers of usefulness. Garfield, as a spiritual President, may yet preside over your destinies, and inspire your senators with added wisdom. Stanley and Chapin may yet unfold to man the boundless love of the Infinite. Carlyle may yet protest against deception and time-serving in all its forms. George Eliot may yet introduce a spiritual vein into popular literature. Beaconsfield may still plead the cause of the oppressed while outgrowing his own bondage to worldly ambition. Sargent may yet help humanity to solve spiritual problems by the aid of such light as shines from the spheres of science, literature and poesy. The Czar of all the Russias, summarily whirled into the unseen world, may yet devise means for the yet more perfect liberation of serfs from bondage, and stem the bloody tide of nihilistic insurrection, by pointing men to the nobler methods of love and justice wherewith to abolish tyranny. And not alone these representative, these prominent spirits, who seem like planets among smaller stars and moons, but your own household darlings, your own dear children, your own highly prized parents, husband, wife or friends, these also are unremoved from among you. They form no insignificant portion of that innumerable cloud of witnesses who incessantly attend your steps through life.

How mysteriously, how beautifully are life and death ever blended. The birth of one year is incident upon the death of another; a year cannot be born unless a year dies; a new period in history cannot commence unless an older period ends, neither can the old pass away without giving birth to the new, in obedience to the law of necessity. Death is thus ever the gate of life. *Mors janua vite*, the painter

names his picture; *Mors janua vite*, the hosts of heaven shout whenever a spirit ends his sojourn in a tenement of dust. Born out of eternity into time, the soul reaches the shores of earth; born out of time into eternity, the soul regains the shores of Paradise. All that poets, painters, musicians, prophets, mediums, have ever told of the immortal life, is but a drop compared to the ocean, a sand-grain to the mountain. No view of life can ever be too hopeful; no pictures of man's future too glowing; for every thought of the human mind wrought in genius or in speech, is but a faint reflection of the reality which produces the reflection. Garbled and imperfect reflections often are; dim light, stormy weather, sullen streams, defects in mortal vision, each and all may conspire to distort the image reflected in the water; but without the substantial reality behind, there can be no portrait. As well expect a photographer to take the likeness of nothing, as expect a human mind to form a theory unless it be a purely negative one, a philosophy of denial, if such a thing be possible, without some rocky foundation of fact on which to build. All the religions of the old world and of bygone years have done their work already for those who are now prepared to enter upon a new spiritual year. Some there are who still need the instruction conveyed in the primary schools of human thought; for their benefit the existing churches and academies may yet for a while remain, but to expect the new revelation of truth to enter and become absorbed within existing institutions, is to ask the man to live comfortably in the garments of childhood.

A new spiritual as well as a new civil year dawns upon the world. Stupendous changes are looked forward to by scientists, ministers of religion, and politicians alike; never in the history of man were so many mighty interests at stake and so many nations in upheaval as at this hour. Absolutism in Germany struggles in vain to regain its lost ascendancy, in a land where intellectual unfoldment is at its height. The German mind, rational and speculative, demanding a reason for all things, bent upon ferreting out the secrets of the universe if possible, will utterly and most indignantly refuse to yield either to Emperor William, Prince Bismarck, or any other individual who would fain personate absolute sovereignty. The German Government, like the Romish church, is threatened with the loss of power because it strives for all power; did it demand some power only, some it might retain. The enormity of its claim is the cause of its downfall. We predict, and that not hastily or without mature thought, that Germany is on the threshold of freedom; that not without strife surely, but still most certainly will she ere long become as

free as this beloved land, beloved by all who recognize the equal rights of man the world over. France, struggling between Republicanism and Monarchy, is swaying surely to the side of a freedom as absolute as your own, freedom to become a great nation with a future history as much greater and loftier than her past record as the history of free America is loftier than the history of this land prior to the Declaration of Independence. France, the land of fruits and flowers and sunny skies; France, the land of daring exploits and great men; France, the land that has witnessed a struggle for freedom so terrible, that her history has oft been written in blood, is yet destined to share with Germany, with Italy, with Spain, with England, with Russia, with Switzerland and the Netherlands, the advantages springing out of a confraternity of nations, a new and gigantic republic, in which various countries may be as truly parts of one continental Republic as the separate States of America are portions of the grand Union. Turkey, as yet under the sign of the crescent, is passing, bankrupt and enfeebled, from under that sign, while the hosts of Allah, and his prophet Mohammed, are pursuing their way into the heart of Africa, there to rescue from barbarism the dwellers in the interior, leading them into a civilization which is but half civilization, but nevertheless a large step in an onward direction. The sign of the cross is passing from over the most highly developed lands of earth, to shine over those who, already rescued from a darker sign, are not yet prepared to live under the sign of the circle, the sign of the angel of harmony who now approaches the earth to give peace to the nations. After Christianity comes the fuller interpretation of those truths and precepts which Christianity has obscured rather than revealed. Are the persecutions and wars of the Christian nations in harmony with the religion of love? Truly said the great teacher, he came not to bring peace but a sword; the sword must slay, but the prince of peace must eventually reign in his kingdom.

To many nations this New Year promises strife, but strife as the prelude of harmony, peace and justice. To *this* nation the New Year promises not bloodshed, or anarchy, or hard times, or famine, or pestilence, except in very slight measure; America has already been baptized in blood. Here the conflict will be intellectual—a war of words; and a very bitter and lengthy war may be needed before the rights of the red man are fully acknowledged and he is recognized as a citizen as well as simply a person. A war, and a very bitter and protracted war, also purely intellectual, will alone make it possible for woman to gain her true rights and be, in the eyes of the laws, in all respects the equal of her husband and brother. But to all reformers, whether temperance advocates, wo-

man suffragists, or strugglers for Indian recognition, we unhesitatingly say, this year comes to you freighted with boundless hope and promise. To all men who, like Dr. Thomas, seek to introduce Spiritualism and liberal religion generally into the Methodist or any other church organization, the year will bring both disappointment and success: disappointment to this extent, that the church, representing the past and not the future, will oppose all innovations and turn out the innovator; success, in the fact that these same heretics and schismatics, as the churches term them, will attract to themselves crowds of earnest listeners, and establish, outside all existing systems, independent centres of usefulness which, being freer, will more readily admit the new light.

Does it seem singular to any of you that so very many, even from among ourselves as a society, have been removed to the spirit-life within the past few months without any warning? Could you peer behind the veil you would see them now rejoicing in greater light, ready and able to work with you as they could not have worked had they remained on earth. They needed a new experience to qualify them to assist in ushering in a new spiritual year. You needed the lesson taught by their transition to fix your thoughts upon the unseen world, with whose occupants you are about to enjoy such close and uninterrupted communion. You have probably all listened to the advancement of the theory that the Grand Gallery in the Great Pyramid signifies this present era now closing. Its length is 1881½ inches, each inch means a year; its ending is strangely abrupt. Out of its paths lead in three directions only. One leads upward to a sanctuary, a chamber of construction in the architecture of the pile; but the entrance to this upper chamber is so steep, it is altogether so inaccessible, that none but winged creatures could attain to it. This prefigures a higher plane of life up to which those aspiring souls shall be raised who, on the wings of pure desire, earnestly strive to enter into such *rapport* with the celestial world that the trials of earth shall pass them by unmolested. Another exit leads abruptly downward, into a yawning abyss of unfathomable depth, signifying in the language of symbol the complete overthrow of despotic power, the removal from earth of much that is to the spirit an incubus, the utter destruction of those harmful tares which are to be burned in the day of judgment with unquenchable fire. The third and directly straightforward exit is along a tortuous passage into the King's Chamber, emblematising the period of transition through which nations must pass ere they enter upon that new period which all who can read the signs of the times must admit is now fast approaching.

The year 1882 speaks of naught that is terrific,

save that purification may involve strife. To all who are acting for the right, to all who wish to fight under the banner of the angels against falsehood, tyranny, and wrong in all its shapes, this year offers unprecedented advantages. Hope on; let courage rise; forget the past, for dwelling upon its failures unfits you for the work immediately at hand. Idle regrets, vain sighs, these can never right a wrong, or counteract an evil. Have you erred in days gone by? no repining can call back the irrevocable past. The only remedy at hand is to throw yourselves with heart and will into the duties of the present, being so taken up with ministering to the needs of the hour that no future can find you unprepared to meet it. The duty of the hour, let this engross your thoughts and hands. Whatever conscience and reason dictate to be done, that do, and when the coming days arrive they will find you prepared for them. Such incessant activity that one has no time for idle regrets and unprofitable forebodings is the only and absolute panacea for all moral ills. Begin everything afresh this day. Persuade yourselves that you are just born; remember not your past mistakes except to avoid their repetition; let the motto for this year be, "Charity never faileth." Charity is concentrated goodness, it is temperance, honor, justice, mercy, hope, faith; all spiritual qualities in one, as white includes all colors and all hues. Begin this year to look at the good in all people and all things. Determine to conquer evil through Love's resistless might, and then, though empires fade and worlds decay, your work, indestructible, a thing of beauty and a joy forever, will lead you into the sphere of everlasting day.

Let us carry out into this new-born year a steady determination to live the truth as well as speak it; and while truth should be ever spoken and acted out in love, love requires from none of us the sacrifice of honor or of individuality. Love is not blind to the mistakes and imperfections of its objects; the kindest law and the kindest mother may be apparently the most severe, not with the severity of offended pride and wounded self-esteem, not with the severity of one who ever wishes to glorify vengeance while misnaming this hideous monster "retributive justice." Justice and mercy are twin sisters, bound as closely together morally as were the Siamese twins physically. They are absolutely inseparable; to divorce them is to kill them. Justice ever demands that the largest possible amount of good be done to the largest possible number, and that not even one shall be so treated that the discipline to which he is subjected shall not work to his highest interest. Mercy can ask no more, no less, no other boon. To punish is often to manifest a spirit of the truest kindness. When love rules everywhere

as the essential cause and spirit of law, then, and then only, will justice be meted out to all. When mercy tempers justice, and justice tempers mercy, then will the day dawn whose light shall shine upon a blessed earth and a truly free people.

In regarding matters from a general or a national standpoint, persons are too apt to consider themselves, if anything goes wrong, in the light of victims of the folly of others, rather than as the arbiters of their own fate, at least measurably. What is a nation but an aggregation of individuals? There is no nation outside of individual life. If every person should say, I am only one, and therefore my power and influence can accomplish so little that it is useless for me to try to reform the world, let him remember that the reformation of the individual signifies the enlightenment of society, as society is made up of individuals. We are in no way responsible for the acts of others unless those acts might have been prevented had we done our duty.

To work faithfully, in obedience to our highest sense of right, is our plain and positive duty. If we have done our very best, we have done for the world just what the world needed to receive from us. If results are not immediately satisfactory, what matters it? If our own consciences condemn us not, let us enjoy peace and happiness in believing that all things are working together for good; but so long as conscience is not satisfied, so long as an upbraiding voice within us says we have not done our duty, no argument, no subtle necessarian sophistry can calm our anguish or allay our fears. Let us resolve to henceforth live above criticism, above seeking the applause of men. Life would indeed be something too frightful to contemplate were we called upon to please everybody and coincide with every one's opinions. You cannot agree with some of your acquaintances and self-appointed critics without of necessity disagreeing with others, as their views are diametrically opposed, and you cannot agree with direct opposites at one time. It is pitiable beyond expression to witness the almost superhuman efforts of some people to offend nobody's prejudices. We cannot but admire their industry and perseverance, but how unworthy is the motive, and how disastrous the failure in almost every instance. How transparent in the eyes of men and women of experience are the motives of those who change their political and religious opinions to suit the parties to whom they are speaking or with whom they are residing—persons who feel that, in order to maintain their social position, they must play the hypocrite. They may be tolerated in certain places and made tools of by unscrupulous partisans, but despised and laughed at by all shrewd worldlings and mourned over by all men and

women of principle they ever must be. Every honorable person respects you for having an opinion of your own, and more still for having at all times and in all places the courage to maintain your convictions.

People sometimes talk of having to make sacrifices for the truth's sake, but no one ever could or can make a sacrifice for the truth, as the truth is infinitely more precious than everything you can possibly give up for it. As well talk of sacrificing bits of glass, if you have an opportunity of exchanging them for precious diamonds, as talk of making a sacrifice when you throw aside some material bauble for the pearl of great price, which can be none other than a clear conscience and unsullied self-respect. Let us one and all, at the threshold of this new year, resolve to be true to our every conviction, to boldly advocate our principles, and never bow in cringing obeisance before the shrine of a popular idol, because it is fashionable to bow before Diana when making silver images for her shrines is a lucrative employment; to copy other people; to be always following the lead of others; to wait to know how they will act, is to degrade yourself, to place yourself beneath them as an inferior. If you are as good as they, is not the fashion you set and the course you pursue as worthy of imitation, as capable of taking the lead, as the customs of others than yourselves? Until all of us show a bold front to the world, and stand true to our colors, neither we nor the truths we have discovered will earn respect or a hearing.

A word of caution in closing may, however, not be out of place in reference to this matter. There are some naturally self-willed and aggressive people who mistake obstinacy for courage, and self-assertion for advocacy of truth. The smallest minds are usually the most obstinate with regard to trifles; they are so taken up with these that little things are so magnified by them that their paltry whims exist in their estimation as matters of gravest moment. The death of a kitten is often more to a child than a catastrophe plunging a nation in distress; and just so the minutest detail is more important than the gravest issue to a small minded, obstinate person. Real will-power cannot afford to fritter itself away in wrangling over trifles; it must husband its strength for great occasions.

The most positive and determinately conscientious man is apt to make many trifling concessions out of pure good nature, just to please others, while, when principle is at stake, he is like adamant, as immovable as the gigantic rocks that have bid defiance to the storms of ages.

Let us, in wishing you all a most happy and prosperous New Year, express our heartfelt prayer that during its progress each one of

you may render unswerving allegiance to your own sense of right. Then when 1882 lies in the urn of the hoary past which now enshrines its predecessor, whether you have attained to emi-

nence in the sight of men or not, your own souls will afford you unending felicity, and you will have earned the "Well done" of the Great Master of all souls—Eternal Truth.

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DEATH IN THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY.

IN MEMORIAM MRS. FRANCES JACKSON EDDY.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

We come to you this morning, friends and fellow-laborers, in the cause of human progress, freighted with a message of boundless hope, of unending joy. No sable plumes, no tearful eyes, no emblems of grief should greet our vision when our mission is but to announce the ascension to a higher life of one of the noblest and truest daughters of freedom your land has ever known. Memorial services have been very frequent of late. The year 1881 has taken from the world of physical life, and introduced into the realm of spirit, so many dearly-loved and remarkable spirits, that probably none of you remember a year since the Peace Jubilee so filled with the visits of the angel of transition.

To the nation the year just closed has been a most eventful one. July had just burst upon you in all its regal splendor, when, mid the strife of the material elements, a heavier clap of thunder than aught that shakes the outward earth electrified the people of this land with sorrow, as it announced the assassination of him who is now your translated and ever-watchful, though invisible President. You mourned for Garfield, not because you were all so blinded by materiality that you could see only annihilation for him, but because in your failure to comprehend the subtle workings of Infinite Wisdom and Love which govern all things, you felt that his removal would bring misery to the nation. You speak of catastrophes, while angels speak of victories; you speak of loss, when they behold only gain; your eyes are dim with tears, while theirs are radiant with smiles celestial; you speak of death, decay, the tomb, the end, while they speak only of more abundant life, rejuvenation, a happy

spirit-home, and the beginning of a series of higher activities than any in which the spirit has yet been engaged.

From out your own midst, from out the immediate circle of those who have been wont to assemble regularly in this beautiful hall, to benefit one another by spiritual contact, as well as to listen to words of inspiration and cheer, many—a great many—have very recently passed to the unseen realm; and many loving hearts in this audience to-day are inquiring of science, philosophy, religion—Where are the dead? and finding that neither science, philosophy nor religion can answer the question satisfactorily to their understanding and their affections, apart from direct spirit intercourse, are gladly availing themselves of all open channels by means of which their friends from the unseen world can reach their own mental consciousness.

To-day we need not remind you, for all hearts are centered more or less directly upon her, we are celebrating the passage to the spirit-realm of one of the most regular attendants and faithful supporters of these meetings—Mrs. Frances Jackson Eddy, daughter of my own very dear and highly esteemed friend, Francis Jackson, who preceded his daughter into the enjoyment of a new life twenty years since. The younger portion of this assembly will fail to realize vividly the thrilling incidents in the life of such stalwart abolitionists as William Lloyd Garrison and Francis Jackson. They may have read of them, and heard their names mentioned with tenderest regard by all who strive to live up to the glorious standard of equality acknowledged as the standard of rectitude by the nation; but one must have lived in those exciting days, one must have mingled in that amazing strife, to be

able to realize how intense was the struggle, and how bitter the opposition, encountered by all true patriots!

I use the word patriot advisedly; but by a patriot I do not mean a cringing, fawning sycophant, who in his ultra-conservative moods will tolerate and even eulogize every form of vice prevailing in the land of his birth, because a majority of citizens are against the amputation of the corrupt limb, and against the destruction of the canker-worm which is eating out the very heart of the nation. By a patriot I mean a man, yea, and a woman also, who is loving enough and brave enough to die for country, if need be, but who would rather see a nation perish in the strife than to assist even one's own land to live upon the miseries of others. The noble, gentle, courageous, invincible woman, who has just entered the ranks of the ascended, was a patriot of the highest and truest type. Oh! how she loved America. No heart ever throbbed more tenderly for its own child than her's for the nation. Her heart was essentially and peculiarly a mother's heart, a typical heart, a heart that foreshadows, to no small extent, the heart of the woman of the future: the woman who is a wife, a mother, a housekeeper, a sympathizer, a creature of emotions, of tender susceptibilities, and yet a being with a vigorous mind, an intellect fully equal to a man's; a lion in bravery, a lamb in docility, wise as a crafty diplomatist, and yet as honest and true as the loveliest and purest maiden unversed in the ways of deception. A study of the character of our promoted heroine cannot fail to benefit and inspire with fresh courage all who are struggling against tyranny and ignorance in their varied forms; and we should deem it a grievous wrong to allow this occasion to pass without emphasizing the peculiar points of greatness in the character of our risen friend that made her life especially noteworthy and exemplary.

By nature she was a lady of exceptionally refined and sensitive disposition and temperament. Her physical appearance clearly indicated how delicately she was framed. In her youth she was a charming girl, exquisitely formed, with gentle and yet powerful movements; an apt scholar, devoted to art and all the beauties which adorn our civilization; highly educated, almost fastidious in her tastes, capable of the strongest affections, and withal possessed of a subtle and enchanting loveliness of mind and purity of heart which made her at once loved and feared in society—loved ardently and unceasingly by all who were conscious of their own moral rectitude, and by all, too, who were longing to confide their sorrows and temptations to one who would sooner perish than betray confidence; feared by the impure, the mendacious, the hypocritical—these could not bear

the glance of those ingenuous eyes, whose vision seemed to extend even into the inmost recesses of the mind. Francis Jackson's daughter is a woman with a history; truly a woman who has seen more, braved more, successfully endured more, than almost any woman whose acquaintance we have ever made. Were her life written it would read like a wonderful romance, and exert a powerful influence for good.

From earliest girlhood our arisen sister was her father's pet—his confidante. When scarcely more than a child she understood politics as few men understand them at forty years of age. She could have voted when twenty-one years old far more intelligently than nine-tenths of the men who wish to keep the ballot from women on the pretense that woman is intellectually the inferior of man. She was possessed of one of those singularly penetrative and lucid natures, not uncommon to ladies of tender breeding, combined with resoluteness of purpose amazing to contemplate. She and her father were one in a very sweet and true sense. She never forgot deference to her parent; never presumed upon his affection; this she could not do, her love was so pure and true; and true love is never presumptuous or unduly familiar; it is always deferential, sensitive, always quick to mark every movement of the mind of the loved object so that it can minister to unspoken needs. In this capacity she was all in all to her father, and her father was all in all to her. They understood each other so perfectly that words would often have been intrusive and unwelcome had they been introduced.

In the spirit-world, among advanced spirits, words are entirely unnecessary; thought is communicated from mind to mind with greater speed than that of lightning. When spirits wish to converse, if there be sympathy between them the thought of the one is made evident to the other; and thus, while adjacent to the earth, there may be and are certain spheres where language is arbitrary, beyond the earthbound states there is but one, and that an universal language—the language of soul-communion. On earth you often wonder why it is that you understand one person and cannot understand another, even though both may express themselves with perfect accuracy in your own language. Why is it that you can comprehend some persons when they say nothing, while others may incessantly talk at you without ever talking to or with you? This problem can never be solved without a knowledge of what Goethe calls "elective affinity"; certain souls harmonizing, blending with each other as naturally and irresistibly as certain atoms unite, while others repel, and only injure one another. Let us learn from our study of Nature's laws to make allowances for those who

cannot see eye to eye with us, remembering that, though they may act toward us with hostility, their conduct may register their ignorance, their organic peculiarities, rather than any deliberate attempt to do us wrong.

When the old historic house in Hollis street was the centre of violent agitation; when persecuted and proscribed men, attacked by violent mobs, were unsafe in the streets and in the public halls of the city; when the name of "abolitionist" was a byword and reproach; when the friends of liberty were everywhere denounced as conspirators against the Government—in the midst of such fierce struggle for the recognition of the rights of man as man, a new light broke in upon her faithful soul. Visions of the bright beyond were clearly revealed to her inward eyes, and she knew positively that death was only a stepping-stone to a newer and higher life. With as much zeal and fidelity as she had ever displayed in the anti-slavery movement, did she espouse the then most unpopular cause of Spiritualism. This incensed many against her more than all her previous actions; but when she found that she must be a martyr of the New Dispensation, she shrank from pain and ostracism no more than did the martyrs of the first Christian Century.

We talk of the bravery of men on the battlefield, and admire the courage they displayed when vanquishing the destroyer. Truly, many men have been brave; truly, many heroes deserve all the laudation offered them. Your statues are none too numerous or too imposing; your eulogies pronounced over the remains of the warrior savor not necessarily of flattery or fanaticism; your observance of Decoration Day every year is an institution which should be countenanced, as a means of helping our innate love of the noble and the brave to expand and purify our lives. But if heroism in man be admirable and wonderful; if heroism on the tented field be marvelous and worthy of highest praise, what think you of the heroism of our heroines, eclipsing that of our heroes?

It is commonly admitted that women can and do endure more pain than men, and yet they suffer more acutely, in proportion to the greater sensitiveness of their natures. Many of your powerful masculine heroes are rugged fellows, with but little susceptibility to those more subtle influences which play so prominent a part in molding female character. But think of the female martyrs of the first century; think of the fortitude of those delicately organized creatures who would allow themselves to be torn in pieces by wild beasts in the Roman arena, rather than deny their convictions and save themselves from death through despicable recantation; think of the women of Europe who, in the days of the sixteenth century reformation,

gave themselves up willingly to the officers of the Inquisition, making death glorious by their valor and truth; think of Joan D'Arc, who, burnt as a witch, glorified spiritual vision by dying for it; think of Florence Nightingale, who left home, with all its delights and luxuries, to serve the suffering soldiers in times of war; think of Grace Darling, who imperiled her own life at any time and for any distressed mariner, so that she might save human life from destruction by water or by famine. Glance your eye over the pages of biblical history and learn how women attended the beloved teacher to the very end, when all his male disciples forsook him: how they appeared first at the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection, before his masculine followers had ventured forth to encounter the Roman guard; remember the Carthaginian women who made ropes of their own hair and suffered everything when Carthage was besieged, that they might rescue their city from Roman invaders, and this after courage had almost utterly died out in the hearts of the strongest soldiers. Think of such women of history, and of their bravery, and then if you dare show your face to an audience of persons who are not savages, and plead for the rights of man *versus* the rights of woman, plead that man shall stand alone in the pulpit and at the bar, that man shall make the laws and enforce them, that man shall elect the representatives of the people and elect them from among members of his own sex only, that man shall be the lord of woman, that wives shall obey their husbands, while husbands are not required to obey their wives, advocate male supremacy, proclaim woman's inferiority to her brother in spite of this testimony of the ages; surely if no voice of protest be heard from man or spirit, the very stones will cry out against the outrage perpetrated upon our common humanity.

The lady who fills our thoughts to-day, and whose spirit pervades this room, is one of the most conspicuous, and at the same time one of the most unostentatious, of the noble army of female martyrs whose bravery and patient endurance, whose intelligence and sweetness of character, wondrously combined, fit her to become what she is, a part and parcel of a sphere of advanced and holy souls whose inspiration shall remodel governments, dethrone tyrants, banish oppression in all its manifold forms, and usher in the dispensation of harmony, in which intuition and intellect, science and religion, man and woman, shall everywhere walk hand in hand. All who were acquainted with Mrs. Eddy cannot fail to have remarked how beautifully her religion was honored in her daily life. She lived her religion always. She never talked it unless duty called upon her to open her lips; but when forced to defend a truth dear to her heart, experimentally precious to

her in hours of darkest woe, when all earthly fountains of comfort were dried up, Demosthenes could scarcely have been more eloquent, Cicero more polished, or Bunsen more profound. Always gentle and refined, always ladylike and courteous, when roused by wrong to protest against it she was a veritable daughter of thunder. She would stand on the rock of truth and defy the waves of opposition, and would gladly have died in the interests of that truth. Cowardice was as foreign to her, hypocrisy as distasteful as a home in the bowels of the earth would be to an eagle. Her nature was one of those deep rare natures, full of reserve force, which in a moment of emergency can display a strength that seems to lookers on positively supernatural; it was the result of calm reasoning, as well as quick spiritual apprehension. She was a reader and a thinker, as well as a medium. She yielded to nothing blindly, and yet, when convinced that she had been previously mistaken, no one could be more ready to acknowledge an error.

No great mind is obstinate. Firmness tempered by discretion is antipodal to obstinate self-will. Firmness of the true type can never be displayed when there is no positive need for action; it is a protestant only when conscience and reason compel opposition to prevailing ideas and customs. Obstinance makes many self-styled martyrs, but it never makes a really great and true one. Persons may quibble for the sake of argument, and urge their fancies, as though a particular style of dress or mode of life signified absolute devotion to duty. Fanatics and riders of hobbies have often forgotten the weighty portions of the moral law, while they have litted their mint and anise, and all kinds of small herbs. Jesus would visit the synagogue every Sabbath, and join in the reading of the law; he would accept an invitation to a ruler's house and share in wedding festivities; in all these particulars he was a conformist to the usages of his times; but when principle was at stake, when honor was involved, then the cross was preferable in his eyes to the following of a fashion.

We all deeply need to discriminate closely and carefully between fighting for the sake of gratifying our pugilistic instincts, making ourselves martyrs in the eyes of men, and taking a bold stand for truth whenever occasion demands. Our beloved sister was not afraid of martyrdom, yet she never courted it. She used every wise precaution, and was a person of sober judgment in all things; not at all the kind of woman to be imposed upon by a prevailing delusion, or to become an anarchist. To her, home was the most sacred of all sacred institutions; social and domestic ties were dear to her, and regarded by her as very sacred obligations; but truth was dearer than all, and

she was one of the few really noble, self-sacrificing persons who never realized that she had made any sacrifices for the truth's sake.

It is pitiable, without offending against good taste I may say that it is disgusting, to listen to the words of so many who have encountered some opposition for the truth's sake, lamenting that they have made such sacrifices in defense of the cause they have espoused—they have given up *so much* in becoming Spiritualists. It is no question of giving up, it is a question of receiving every time and all the time. You do not talk of sacrificing brass for gold, glass for diamonds. A sacrifice signifies a surrender of something valuable for something of less worth. If the baubles of earth are of more value in your eyes than the treasures of the immortal spirit; if the favor of men and the applause of fashionable society can more than compensate for your loss of self-respect, an approving conscience, a knowledge of the presence of your dear departed friends, and an assurance that you are increasing their happiness as well as furthering your own, by holding close and free communion with them, and working side by side with them in all your undertakings—if, we say, creature comforts and the plaudits of earth's great men and women: great in the mean, vile, contemptible sense in which people are called great if they but have money, and lands, and titles, irrespective of the nature or quantity of their intelligence or spirituality—if their approval is what you live for, if its loss is the severest blow that can fall upon you, you are foolish indeed if you give up so priceless a gem (?) for so insignificant (?) a compensation as spiritual knowledge; but if, on the other hand, friends, kindred, honors, wealth, all save spiritual light, are as nothing in comparison with that light, then you can make no sacrifice, you can give up nothing worth retaining when you exchange worldly honors for spiritual satisfaction.

No one can serve two masters; multitudes try it, but all fail ignominiously; in their endeavors to please both they please neither. The keenest satire in essay and in fable has been employed in all ages to exhibit in its true light the folly as well as the wickedness of temporizing. Spiritualism is regarded as charlatanism, a vile imposture, a machination of Satan, in many places to-day, because so many who boast of their knowledge of spirit life when in the society of avowed Spiritualists, are afraid to show their colors to the outside world. In the name of all that is true and all that is sensible, if spirit-communion is a something so unworthy that you have reason to be ashamed of announcing that you practice it, turn your back upon it once for all. If it is no better than existing theologies, then why pursue your investigations any further? If you are ashamed of it anywhere or at any time,

have done with it; cast it behind you as a tempter. But if it be to you a source of joy; if it be a new light guiding your otherwise foundering bark safe over the tempestuous waves of life's stormy main; if it be a truth, and you know it to be such—if it is infinitely better than all beside—if it is grander and purer and mightier than all else, and destined ere long to conquer its every adversary, can you dare to imitate Judas and imprint upon its forehead a traitorous kiss by professing friendship for it when among its friends, only to denounce and betray it into the hands of its enemies when you are among its foes? Be not like Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; follow not the wretched example of the cowards and knaves of history who have accomplished their own misery, brought about their own destruction by trifling with conviction, but follow, rather, the glorious lead of such faithful souls as she whose new birth we this day celebrate. If we ever participate in her reward, we must engage in the self-same battle in which she fought and conquered.

Was not our heroine a conqueror indeed? You who watched her steadily for the twenty years that have elapsed since her father's transition, in 1861, cannot fail to have perceived how completely she rose above every trial to which she was subjected: how her life was spent half, or less than half, on earth; how she could attend to domestic duties, shine in literary and social circles, and yet spend her days and nights with her ascended father. From the moment of his transition a new life came to her. She was two in one—a woman and a man; her father's traits and disposition were clearly discernible in his favorite daughter, and from the moment when she imprinted her farewell kiss upon that beloved parent's marble brow till the day she passed from your vision, he and she were one. She had taken his nature into her own; and then, when earthly things receded, when the beautiful, white mother Death extended her wings and gently bore the patient, loving soul to her home beside the still waters, in the green pastures of a far better land, the change came to her in the light of a father calling a child to himself.

We have all one Father in the spirit-life, the Infinite All-Good; but how sweet it is to have two fathers, one human and one divine; one infinitely beyond the furthest stretch of thought or imagination, and the other just one step above us, a purely human father—one whom we can comprehend and recognize, as well as apprehend and worship; one into whose arms we have been accustomed to fling ourselves in hours of pain and grief, in years long past; one who to us is the embodiment of all we most love and most need; one through whom the Infinite comes to us as the sun comes in a

beam of light. "In my Father's house are many mansions." How often has our treasured sister read these delightful words, and from them extracted solid comfort and surpassing joy. How ineffably sweet is it now to know that she is in her Father's house in every sense, and that death to her, in the light of the Spiritual Philosophy, was no leap in the dark; it was the action of a loving child springing gladly into its father's arms.

What more beautiful event can possibly take place in the history of a human spirit than the event of death, if so be that the spirit about to be delivered from the physical body is ready for the change? Old World notions of the hereafter are fast losing their hold upon men and women everywhere, as they begin to realize that death is only one link in the great chain of everlasting being, and that it is therefore no more dreadful to die than to be born. Death is no more the result of transgression than is birth, unless death be premature, occasioned by the folly or crime of an individual. Then, and then only, can death be regarded in the light of a foe; and even under such painful circumstances as those attending the death of the suicide or the man who has shortened his term of days by dissolute living, a gleam of light illumines the darkness, as we learn of nature everywhere that through the suffering consequent upon error, the soul is delivered from bondage to that ignorance and vice which culminated in a hasty severance of soul and body.

In the spirit-life every spirit finds himself somewhat benefited by the change from earthly life. Evil or undeveloped spirits, who are deaf, blind and impotent on entering the spirit-world, by reason of their having failed to develop a spiritual organism while dwelling on earth, in which they could sense and enjoy the beauties of spirit-life, find that even in their case death has been an angel of blessing. The privation, toil and suffering following upon misdemeanor and neglect of opportunities for spiritual unfoldment, helps them forward by revealing to them how utterly impossible it is to beg, borrow, buy or steal in spirit-life. In the realm of spirit everything must be earned or not attained. We are powerless to use, enjoy, or even perceive that which has no affinity to a developed condition within ourselves. Our homes, our garments, our general surroundings, are the result of our inward state. Creation simply means organization. Scientists declare that matter itself is indestructible, and thus presumably eternal. Every world as much as every organism is simply atoms in aggregate form; dissipate the atoms, disunite them, and the form is gone; reunite them, and it reappears. Man has within himself every element of nature. Man contains everything that is

below him; quantity alone exceeds him in the mountain or the ocean, quality can never surpass him. Let man on earth absolutely control his own body, let him subdue every passion, let his spiritual power be the force where-with he conquers every obstacle, and there is nothing on the earth too mighty for him to overcome. Faith, or, more correctly, will-power, more correctly still, soul-force, is adequate, even as proverbially said, to remove a mountain, as everything must eventually yield to spirit, to intelligence, which is the secret source of all power.

Creation in the spirit-world appears no mystery. The action of spirit, transforming chaos into order, is no longer a subject baffling research and engendering strife between schools of conflicting thought, for all around us, everywhere, we behold the work of creation incessantly going on; not, indeed, the making of something out of nothing, but the rendering visible of that which is ordinarily invisible, and the disintegration of forms no longer needed or fitted to survive. In spirit-life no soul is arbitrarily located in a certain spot in the universe; the location is the result and evidence of interior condition: If we are attracted to Europe, to Australia, or to Jupiter; if something in our nature corresponds to dwellers in those parts, we find ourselves there, or we find those whom we seek by our sides. If we love society and cannot endure to be alone, if we have tastes for certain things and occupations, all these tastes can be gratified, as we attract to us, or develop around us, whatsoever can form our natural environment and assist us in the externalization of our especial gifts.

To attempt any description of my spirit home, to endeavor to enlighten you, to any great extent, upon the reality of substance in the spirit-world, would be to enter upon a field of thought and speech so vast that ages might be consumed easily in the elaboration of our theme; but however fascinating may be a study of the great beyond, however interesting and instructive glowing accounts of other worlds than your own may be, the human heart demands satisfaction in an hour when the brain is utterly unable to work. You all care more for reunion with your loved ones than you do for golden harps, and fronded palms, for verdant pastures and for crystal streams. All the gorgeous beauty of tropic scenery, all the sweet cadence of heavenly melodies, all the beauty and fragrance of celestial flowers is as naught compared with the blessedness of union with the darlings of your heart. Will this unspeakable privilege be denied you? Universes, filled with radiant souls, emphatically answer, No. Choiring angels, whose multitude no man can number, all reply that love can no more be extinguished than God can cease to be. Because you love one another,

therefore you will meet; because of your sympathy, no force in nature can draw you apart, as love is the eternal cement, binding together all parts of the great temple of the soul in wonderful and everlasting symmetry.

Is death terrible? To the barbarian, who has received no light from the spheres beyond, whose soul is utterly enveloped in materiality, it may be, as the unknown is always the dreaded; to the man of evil life, who cares for naught save the accumulation of earthly treasure, who goes out into the unseen world conscious of having wronged others, death may be terrible, for there can be no escape from that fear of consequences which is the penalty of transgression throughout the universe. To the materialist, who sees naught beyond death—no resurrection for the real man as a conscious, individual spirit, naught for the body save the charnel-house, and nothing for any part of man other than his body, as the body to him is all, death may be terrible; to the frightened spirit, oppressed with creeds born of ignorance and slavish dread of priestly power and an angry God, to the soul afraid to spread its pinions and fly to the angels for fear they should be devils in disguise, death may be terrible; but to all of these it is less terrible than their fears. To some of them it can only be a joyful and overwhelming surprise; but to the enlightened Spiritualist who has found a truth that robs the grave of all its victory and takes from death all its sting, death is not simply not terrible, it is positively delightful. It means exchanging a hut for a palace, a body of humiliation for one that gives far more perfect freedom to the soul; recognition of dearest friends after long years of imagined absence, and the crowning of every earthly hope.

Death is the precursor of higher life; it comes to every bird, flower, animal and tree; it came long before man dwelt on earth, and without it earth could never have evolved man's physical organism. *Mors janua vitæ*—"DEATH THE GATE OF LIFE." Write this motto in fair white lilies upon the graves of your dear ones whom the angel of transition has translated to their higher homes. Death for you all, if you will but tread in the path hallowed by the footsteps of the great and good of every age, will be the most welcome visitor who has ever crossed your threshold; but remember, oh, remember, that to win the prize our dear sister has so fully won, we must live as nobly as she lived. Of all the members of our circle represented here, no one has ever set a more blessed example than she who now has gone to her rest and recompense. In the midst of severest trial and fiercest persecution, like the great teacher of Palestine, when reviled she reviled not again; when cruelly injured she only prayed and worked for the good of her oppressors. In the new era now

commencing, when love shall be the controlling power, bright as any of the brightest in the galaxy of stars that will shine as beacon-lights in the firmament above the earth, shedding upon it their healing beams, will appear the loving, brave, strong and radiant spirit who upon earth loved to be known as a daughter of Francis Jackson.

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THE COMING PHYSICIANS AND HEALING INSTITUTES.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

This morning we commence a short series of Sunday morning lectures on "Things to Come," and while we should probably have opened the series in another place, had there been no immediate necessity for the delivery of a discourse on this particular theme, in view of the great interest now being taken by a multitude of our friends in the work of healing, and in the opening of a Spiritual Bethesda in this city in particular, we felt that we could not do otherwise than speak from a text allowing us to present the particular claims of this institution to the attention and sympathies of the public, without being guilty of unwarrantable divergence from the topic advertised.

It is very natural for one to ask at the outset of our remarks: What constitutes a true physician? How can we distinguish between the real and the counterfeit? Can physicians be manufactured by collegiate instruction, or must they be born for the performance of works of healing, and be left wholly untrammelled, to tread in the path marked out for them by nature; a path in which they can never walk alone, but one in which they will ever be assisted, knowingly or unknowingly to their outer consciousness, by celestial helpers? In answer to these important queries it behooves us to emphatically protest against all attempts to reverse the order of nature, as is frequently attempted, by ignoring or dwarfing natural in-born tendencies, and in their place striving to create other tendencies by unnatural means.

Education does not imply creation or infusion; it implies simply unfoldment. Plato, and indeed almost every celebrated Greek philosopher, acknowledged the existence of latent knowledge and innate possibility in every in-

dividual born upon earth, and very wisely claimed that academics and academicians could only properly discharge their duties when they sought to bring into active, external prominence those gifts which, lying dormant in the breast of the scholar, qualified him for a special place in the world; a place as important as any, even though by no means necessarily an elevated station in the eyes of men. In the medical profession to-day, in this country as well as in England, and all over Europe, and in the Colonies, are to be found many men who went into the medical profession to please their parents or friends, or because they thought the work was lucrative and eminently respectable. In England there are five professions considered sufficiently dignified for the sons of the nobility and gentry; these five are: the ministry in the Episcopal Church, the physician, the lawyer, and serving in an official capacity in the army and the navy. It was, at all events until quite recently, considered a degradation to go into business—a gentleman must go into one or other of the learned professions; and thus frequently the most brainless and dissipated young men, who have had genteel friends, have been forced into the church or into the medical profession, in which, either as theological or medical quacks, they have been a source of incalculable injury to the community.

The ignorant have at all times superstitiously venerated the priest and the doctor; and in proportion to the ignorance of the people those professionals have always received from them blind and unquestioning obedience. The priest is the physician of souls; he can open heaven and close hell; if he is disregarded he can anathematize, rob a man of employment, the

regard of his associates, and send him out into the world a fugitive and a vagabond, cursed like Cain, marked as a man unfit to be countenanced in decent society. We all know how many great and good men the church has cursed. Wherever the church is in full power, ignorance and the suppression of one's powers of development is one's only safety.

And who have these priests often been? The almost brainless, though very egotistical and bigoted boys, younger sons of families whose reputation was stainless because they owned lands stolen by their ancestors by brute force from their original possessors, placed in a position as mediators between God and man, representatives of the head of the whole church of God on earth and in heaven, with no other qualification for holding such offices than a college career, almost entirely wasted in dissipation, and the imposition of a bishop's hands, a formal, oftentimes soulless, rite, the effete relic of a once powerful and magical ritual in which the powers of soul, mind and matter were illustrated in the transference of power from the prophet to the trembling novitiate needing the sustenance to be derived from a more advanced soul and a more potential will ere he could take upon himself the sacred duties attaching to the priestly office.

At one time priests were a necessity and a blessing. They would be a blessing to-day if they were all men duly qualified by natural endowment and spiritual development to minister to the spiritual needs of those who are not yet strong enough to stand without leaning upon stronger ones for support; or who are so fully engrossed in material duties and possess such physical organisms that they cannot realize spiritual things through their own unaided mediumship. In ancient times the priest and the physician were one. The followers of Edward Irving, who style themselves the Catholic Apostolic Church, in their attempts to restore the primitive discipline of the Christian Church, have taken one grand forward step in ordaining that their ministers should be physicians as well as teachers, and in recognizing the gift of healing as one of the ever-present and active gifts of the spirit among men. They have also done well in allowing room for various orders of pastors and teachers, and in permitting those who are engaged in secular duties to minister in sacred things, if qualified by nature and inspiration to do so. Edward Irving was unquestionably a great medium, an inspired teacher, and while he never wholly shook off old prejudices, he was far more liberal than his followers, who, like the Swedenborgians, have refused to progress beyond certain fixed limits, and have thus sounded the death knell to their own advancement as a body of people.

If the time ever comes when Spiritualists

organize and have a restrictive creed; if they ever come to be known as a distinctive class of persons adding one more to the immense number of conflicting sects of religionists in the land, their usefulness will wane, and the spirit will gradually recede from among them. Spiritualism, before and above all else, demonstrates the individuality of the human soul, and therefore argues that each individual is born into the world to fill a special niche in the universe, which must forever remain vacant unless he occupies it. The admission of this fact is the acceptance of the truth that the minister of religion, the physician, the governor, the artisan, the agriculturist, are all born for their places and distinctive work; and thus it is as futile to expect them to succeed in each other's spheres as to demand that Jupiter revolve in the orbit of Neptune.

In the spiritual world there is no striving for office, no contention for rank, no clamor for recognition, as each soul gravitates to its own centre, each spirit seeks and finds its own affinities, and can no more be kept away from the object of its strongest attachment than the needle can be prevented from following the drawing of the magnet.

Remove emolument, position, and all earthly honors attaching to office, and the right men will fall into the right places. Let the work of the farmer or the cook be as much respected as that of the President of the Union, and civil service reform will effect itself, while bribery and corruption will henceforth forever be disassociated from political elections. Position can be pleasant to no one who is not qualified to fill it; but while unworthy and unfit persons do not seek position for its own sake, they will continue to seek it for the sake of social standing, wealth, and the many honors connected with the tenure of office. The panacea for a multitude of existing evils is the simple recognition of moral worth, beauty of character, and sweetness of disposition. Acknowledge these in all classes of society as capable of creating a natural nobility, and in the aristocracy of the future the domestic servant may be, in the truest sense, a lady of title or even a queen. Real worth and faithful industry adorning one's life make even the most menial work divine.

Remove from the medical profession all that now makes it attractive to the aspirant for honors, and leave it to those only who like to heal the sick, and for the love of humanity to engage in medical work, and instantly so enormous would be the exodus from the ranks of M. D.s that instead of twenty doctors or more in a single Boston street, physicians would be few and far between. "Quackery" would then be killed on the spot; it would die a natural death, independent of all legislative attempts to destroy it. The legislature, however, is frequently uphold-

ing quackery, and denouncing genuine practice, when it strives to support every man who has been through college, while it condemns as pernicious and irregular the treatment given by all natural healers and nurses who have not passed a medical examination, graduated from college, earned (or purchased, as is often the case,) a diploma, or won the endorsement of some self-appointed dictator whose egotism and bigotry are often only inferior to his profound ignorance of human needs.

The disciples of Esculapius, Paracelsus, or Hahnemann may have within their systems of theory and practice, each and all, a large share of truth; but the truly eclectic physician, who is neither bound to the exclusive use of drugs, minerals, electricity, nor any other special curative or presumably curative agent, is by far nearer to the position of a natural physician than is any limited specialist. Human needs are so varied that one form of treatment may be life-giving in one case and death-producing in another. However much the old adage may be called in question by bigots, there is infinite truth in the trite proverb—"What is one man's meat is another's poison." There are certain general necessities indeed common to all men, which must be met. All need food, shelter, clothing, sunshine, sympathy, and congenial occupation and surroundings; but the environment which is most highly conducive to the welfare of certain individuals is unspeakably deleterious in its effects upon others. Who, then, is a physician, and what, then, is the true method of cure? Can we ever hope to find the *elixir vitae* which shall banish all ills and transform earth into a paradise?

In the first place, a physician is not necessarily an anatomist or physiologist; he may have little or no experimental knowledge of anthropology; he may be a painter, a singer, a pianist, a harpist, an organist, a horticulturist, or simply a genial member of society, not remarkably proficient in any scientific or artistic direction. Yet he must be a person of harmonious temperament, of genial and affectionate disposition; must have a kindly heart, and be distributive rather than acquisitive; must be a sympathizer, a well-wisher to humanity. If he has these elements he is a duly qualified physician for certain cases, though by no means for all. Some complicated cases in the present state of society absolutely need the surgeon's skill, and cannot be reached simply by sympathy or magnetism; not because any diseases or accidents are beyond the reach of soul-power, which is the mightiest of all powers, but because, and only because, persons cannot always be found whose soul-nature is so far unfolded as to permit of their employing this absolute force to perfection; but whenever, as in the case of Jesus, and a few very remarkable Hindu

healers, the gift of healing has been developed to the extent of the absolute surrender of the senses to the soul, then the *divine* law of cure is in operation, and the soul gathers to itself and dispenses to the sufferer whatsoever elements in the spiritual or material kingdoms are needed to produce results in the patient's organism.

It is a mistake to suppose that when a higher power is in operation a lower agency is set aside as worthless. The lower agency is simply employed by the superior into whose service it is pressed. When we fully take into consideration the scientific declaration that man is the epitome of the earth, that in the human organism are to be found all conceivable and possibly existent elements upon the face of the globe, or hid within the bowels of the earth, we shall have no difficulty in recognizing how roots and herbs may have healing properties, and be most useful, and yet that they are unnecessary when the emanations from a human organism are such that they not only include the elements found in these natural products, but also possess the power, in obedience to the law of elective affinity, to attract to themselves kindred elements existing in vaporized form in the atmosphere. You are probably all of you aware that matter can exist in four forms, solid, fluid, gaseous and ethereal. In its solid and fluid forms it is always visible, sometimes partially visible as gas, but invisible to all but clairvoyants in the state of etherialization. The very air we breathe is made up of the elements of which our own and all other bodies, human, animal, vegetable or mineral, are composed. Man's physical structure is condensed air or solidified atmosphere. If scientific appliances were only at hand sufficiently potent any solid body could be disintegrated and allowed to remain with you in the room, and yet be wholly invisible, and after remaining for a while in the state of invisibility be reunited by the same invisible (or possibly apparent) scientific processes. The possibilities of humanity transcend all fairy tales and legends; no miracle is so wonderful that it is impossible; the mistake ordinarily made is simply that of limiting nature, and pronouncing blindness upon the extent of her resources.

Jesus healing by laying on of hands, by word of command, is a type of the coming physician; his methods of cure are the highest and most efficacious imaginable, and are identical with the methods of the most advanced and successful among those irregular practitioners who find so little favor to-day in the eyes of the law that they are forbidden to practice in certain States of the American Union. While it is certainly desirable that persons who as pharmacists dispense poisons should be reduced to a minority and be specially qualified for the performance of their dangerous work by special training, and while it is also desirable to legislate against

the administration of dangerous drugs and minerals by ignorant persons, it is of course well to have a law punishing all who would entrap the unwary and endanger human life: whereas, to legislate against clairvoyant and magnetic practice, against the use of simple herbal remedies by mediums and others, is to legislate against all enlightenment, all liberty, all save the arrogance of specialists, and the course of sciolistic treatment which resulted, humanly speaking, in the death of the President of the United States. It is not for us to cast the slightest shadow upon the physicians in attendance upon the President as gentlemen of honor, but their lamentable ignorance, despite their vaunted knowledge, was most certainly an important factor in the fatal outcome. Guilean and medical ignorance combined removed the earthly form of our beloved, arisen hero.

Clairvoyance is a natural gift, and cannot be taught in academies, though, like all other gifts, it can be assisted to develop by harmonious surroundings and constant and systematic exercise. The Orientals, gazing into crystals and magic mirrors, have no doubt stimulated, in many instances, the natural endowment of seership—as gazing intently upon any object, until one becomes abstracted and passive, is the most ready and effectual means of helping the power to unfold, and become serviceable. Strict attention to physiological requirements is indeed a vast aid to mediumship, of the highest type, but no study of physiology can in and of itself develop an obtuse person into a *lucide*. The true clairvoyant is born a clairvoyant; and while the burning of incense, the perfume of fresh flowers, soft music, and other pleasing accessories and inducements, may assist in invoking the latent gift, all the painstaking magicians and students of the occult in all ages and climes have testified in favor of the paramount superiority of a good natural magician—*i. e.*, a natural spirit-medium or psychic—to any of those artificially-developed seers who have forced themselves to become clairvoyant by long and painful processes of self-immolation, extending through many successive years of arduous and often terrific discipline. These persons, when developed, are insignificant in their spiritual attainments, when contrasted with many an unsophisticated boy or girl twelve years of age who is born with the gift of seership.

It has been stated by many authorities that probably if not certainly every human being can learn music, painting, or languages if he only be not constitutionally and organically deficient physically or mentally. We agree that there is not a sane, healthy, fully formed person on earth who cannot learn to play, or sketch, or speak in foreign tongues, to some slight extent, if he only be diligent in his studies; but

though this be admitted, common sense and universal experience alike testify to the arrant folly of forcing into bloom minor powers, when time, energy, and all else ought to be employed in other ways, clearly pointed out by nature. Mozart, when a boy of eight, was, as a musician, infinitely superior to the forced musician who has barely any natural sense of time and tune after forty years of arduous toil. The earliest attempts of such a painter as Raphael are immensely more artistic than the forced sketches of the man or woman who has been forty years trying to produce pictures when nature designed him or her to be something other than an artist. In this ratio does the natural clairvoyant or healer stand head and shoulders above the student who has merely book knowledge to assist him in his battle with disease. A little ignorant child naturally clairvoyant might have located the ball in the President's body, had she been taken to his bedside and allowed to voice her impressions or describe what she saw; we have positively known of cases which baffled the most learned physicians, dealt with so satisfactorily by an uneducated child, a natural seeress, that the sufferer was restored to perfect health simply through the intervention of the clairvoyance of a simple village maiden.

Clairvoyance is absolutely necessary to the successful treatment of the most complicated disorders; and as clairvoyance is more closely allied to instinct and intuition than to reason or scholarship, the uneducated are often the revealers of that which the most eminent scientist can never discover. How many persons die every year because their disorders are unknown to their physicians. Even when the doctor knows how to treat a certain infirmity, he kills his patient by treating him for a disease he is not suffering from, and which requires diametrically opposite treatment. Clairvoyance comes to the rescue in those complicated cases which baffle the most eminent physician's skill; and without interfering in the slightest with the notions of the regular practitioner, as to the proper mode of treatment for a certain disease, the death-rate will soon be immeasurably lower through its revelations.

In addition to clairvoyance, magnetism must be admitted into the list of the necessities in medical practice, which is a force generated by the mind and body of a magnetizer—often unconsciously to himself. This agent is also often in the hands of the illiterate. To generate and dispense healthful magnetism, it is simply essential to have a pure mind and a pure body. Can you help perspiring when you are warm? or breathing when you live? Without any knowledge of the laws governing breath or perspiration emanations leave your form and of course affect the atmosphere into which they are projected. A flower scents the breeze, a candle

tree poisons it, and yet neither the flower nor the tree is a conscious responsible agent. It is a libel upon the laws of nature to dare to say that disease is contagious, while good health is not. We can "catch" good health most assuredly if we can ever take on disease. Everything is contagious, and thus we are frequently blessed by unrecognized benefactors, and injured by unseen enemies.

In the true art of healing, diverse methods are employed—some of them artistic, some eminently scientific, the result of deliberate and lengthy study and research, some purely spontaneous. We trust that no one will have so far mistaken us as to imagine that we wish to place a premium upon ignorance, and a discount upon knowledge. The reverse is our desire; but we do most emphatically affirm two important things: one of which is that unconscious and purely instinctive instrumentalities are frequently powerfully efficacious, and the other that unseen intelligences can help us when we are not aware of their existence, and are most powerful to aid us when we are passive, and therefore receptive to their benign influence. Passivity is never coexistent with strife and discord; to be passive one must be at rest, and therefore whatever tranquilizes the mind is the greatest of all incentives to restoration to health. Nature will always do her own work without assistance from any one, if she is only left free to act. To place the invalid in a condition where his own spirit can remove obstructions and build up wastes, is to set about the work of healing most effectually and intelligently.

Purely physical ailments, and especially accidents, may need simply external remedies, and sometimes the surgeon's skill. If you break a leg or arm, the bone-setter, by his art, may replace the dislocated joint, and thus pave the way to recovery; but is it not the experience of all of you that nine-tenths at least of the ailments of our countrymen and women are due to nervous prostration? Is not illness often the direct result of worry, grief, bereavement, disappointment, unhappiness? are there not thousands of sensitive hearts breaking for lack of sympathy? These weary ones can be ministered to by no pills or powders; the medicine they need is sympathy. What multitudes of highly-strung nervous people there are, even in this city alone, who are worried almost into their graves by a thousand and one ailments which proceed directly from mental disquietude! how many there are who are perpetually misunderstood, incessantly misinterpreted by their nearest associates! The only physician who can reach them is the ready sympathizer—the man or woman of deep perceptions who can draw them out of themselves by appealing to their repressed energies. Here medical science is

powerless, while the spirit of love is well nigh omnipotent.

Physicians in such cases as these usually prescribe change of air and scene, a trip to the country or seashore: anything to relieve the sufferers from the gridding monotony and terrible pressure of that uncongenial life which is fast hastening them away from earth. Ought there not, in pleasant healthful resorts, to be established healing institutions where sufferers, jaded with the strife of the city, can find relief from their wearing burdens? and ought we not, as rejoicers in the knowledge of spirit power and the efficacy of nature's uninterrupted loveliness, to establish homes and retreats for those who cannot afford to pay large prices for accommodation? Ought we not to give freely out of our abundance to those who are financially so crippled that they can pay nothing for care or treatment? Hospitals do some good, but hospitals, like prisons, reformatories and lunatic asylums, are attended with great danger to sensitives, as so many sick people are congregated beneath one roof; and without the most studious attention to ventilation and disinfection—without a great number of separate rooms for individual patients, and a very large corps of healthy attendants, weak and timid persons are liable to take in the germs of disease thrown off by other sufferers. Whenever practicable it is highly desirable to give treatments at the patient's home, reserving the institution as a centre of spiritual force, and an asylum for those who positively cannot be aided outside its walls.

Many persons there are who have large artistic natures, and are ailing because they are obliged to live in dingy dwellings, where discordant sights and sounds incessantly distress the eye and ear. In the healing institute music, flowers, paintings, etc., will be absolute necessities; and when patients are invited to rest in a magnetized apartment, and feast eyes and ears upon sights and sounds of beauty, they will quickly experience a change of conditions for the better, similar to that experienced by Saul, when David drove away his ailment and relieved him of obsession by playing dexterously upon his harp. Sights and sounds are medicine, and the artist as well as the physiologist will have a great work to do in the coming hospital. Has it not often struck you that in the Bible almost every form of treatment is prescribed except those forms catalogized by professing Christians, who profess to believe in biblical infallibility and the divinity of Jesus?

Jesus healed only by word of command; i. e., soul and will-power reaching the fettered spirit of the sufferer, after having arrested his attention by forcing him to acknowledge their potency; animal magnetism imparted either by imposition of hands or by contact with magnetized fabric: and on one occasion the saliva from

his mouth, when he made clay of his spittle and anointed the eyes of a blind man. A woman, after suffering twelve years from a most distressing malady, having grown worse rather than better, as she squandered her means upon physicians, grew instantly well as she touched the robe of the Christ. In the Acts we are told how handkerchiefs and aprons taken from the bodies of the apostles healed the sick; and in the epistle of James we are introduced to prayer and oil; but beyond these spiritual, psychological and most simple and natural physical remedies, we are introduced to nothing as a curative agent.

We do not wish to blindly follow the New Testament, or any other book; but we have a right to expect the coöperation of all Christians, as well as of Spiritualists and Eclectics, when our method of action is a direct act of obedience to the express commands of the Christian's God, who commissioned his followers to lay their hands on the sick that they

should recover—but never are we told to give them drugs or minerals.

The New Spiritual Bethesda, on behalf of which we solicit your kindly interest and coöperation, is an endeavor to put the knowledge we possess on the subject of healing to practical account. A house can be obtained in a pleasant street at a low rent, commodious and appropriately furnished: the parlors will be hung with pictures, will be provided with piano, etc., and be devoted largely to entertainments, lectures, etc., tending to the enlightenment of the populace. The upper rooms will be offices devoted to healers. Only to those who are impressed to contribute money, time, articles of *virtu* or anything else, do we appeal. As the spirit moves, so act; and let us remember that in every endeavor to aid our brethren we are binding closer and ever closer around our own hearts those angelic influences whose presence and support we all of us so earnestly desire and greatly need.

BERKELEY HALL LECTURES.

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THE COMING RACE.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

INVOCATION.

Eternal and Infinite Spirit! fountain of all wisdom, light and life, our Father and our Mother God, immanent in all creation, adored by every being, we praise thee that from eternity to eternity thou art the same; that while the generations of men come and go, while human life is portioned out so that all have their joys and their sorrows, their weaknesses and their strength, their gladness and their pain, that unto Thee, the infinite source of all good, the jarring sounds of earth seem blent into a psalm, as to thine infinite ear there arises no discord, but only the harmonies of the universe forever. As we look down the long vistas of past ages, as we see how steadily man has risen from a state of barbarism, in which he appears scarcely above the animal in thought and in action, until he stands to-day, erect and free in the pride of intellect and in the greater glory of spirituality; as we behold how in all ages a spirit of beneficence, a spirit of rectitude, of desire for justice, and for mercy also, has guided men and women over difficulties which would otherwise have been insuperable, we indeed rejoice in the blessed assurance that all things are working together for good, and that, though there may be much that is inexplicable upon the earth as yet, thou art in all things expressing thy goodness unto every being. We rejoice to feel that thy law is perfect love, and that thy infinite love is the motive power in all nature. When we are confronted with the stern laws of being, we delight to feel that they are but the pulsations of a father's and a mother's heart; then the immense power which would awe us into abject fear did we not behold that it was perfect love and was forever to be unto us the righter of all our wrongs, the vanquisher of all our foes, the ending of all our doubt and our fear, becomes our solace and our joy.

Now that nations are rising up, one against another, showing signs of an impending strife; now that in all lands fierce conflict rages between party and party, between man and man; now that the forces of despotism or absolutism are struggling for ascendancy, while the power of the goddess Liberty is still exalted over the earth with promise of perfect conquest in the fu-

ture; now that many are stricken down suddenly by the hand of the silent messenger whom men call death, but who is only the janitor at the gate of everlasting life; now that sudden disturbances come upon many, and many hearts are perplexed in this transitional era, we rejoice to realize that no avenging spirits are nigh, that no hosts of iniquity are let loose upon the earth to destroy it, but that thou art causing the earth and all its inhabitants and all religious ideas and all knowledge to pass through the crucible of difficulties and pain, that all may come forth as gold purified seven times in the furnace, as precious metals separated from all their alloy. May all our hearts rejoice in the cleansing fires of perfect love; and whenever we hear of calamity or disaster may we behold only the working of that regenerative force which brings forth, like a phoenix from the pile of ashes, a more beautiful universe out of a universe that is passing away. In that new universe of harmony may we all find places for us prepared, as by all holiness of thought, word and action, we affiliate with those celestial ones who are but making ready the earth and its inhabitants for a more perfect revelation from the sphere of unsullied truth. In loving ministry to all our brethren in need, may we praise thee acceptably in time and through eternity. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

We bring before you to-day a subject of vast interest and importance—a theme of immense scope, affording food for thought and reflection almost infinite. The subject has been treated in a great variety of ways, directly and indirectly, by almost all representative speakers and authors, and by many humbler or more private authorities, unto whom, in their privacy, loftiest and truest ideas often come. We do not propose, in a single discourse, to do anything more than open up a line of suggestive thought, leaving it to you, in your own hours of reflection and communion with higher

spheres, to elaborate and elucidate this fascinating theme. Bulwer Lytton's work, "The Coming Race," is undoubtedly an inspired production, by no means as purely imaginative as many critics have pronounced it. To that work we alluded somewhat in our address on "The Coming Government," and thus shall not make any special allusions to the ideas and inspirations of that celebrated writer to-day. In speaking of the coming race, we tell you at the outset that we do not expect that the human family will ever be superseded on the planet by any other family; and why? Because man displays boundless powers of progression. We may speak of the infinite life of man, and by the use of the word "infinite" we mean that to which we can assign no limits, even as the universe is limitless to us, whatever it may be or may not be to God—even as space is limitless to us. We can never solve the problem of immensity: in this sense, certainly, the life of man is an infinite life; a life which we cannot measure; a life which we cannot fully comprehend; a life which soars infinitely beyond us and seems to embrace eternity. We use the word eternity, we use the word immortality; and what do we mean by eternity and by immortality? We mean that which we cannot fully understand, but that which we instinctively know to have existence. If you try to solve the problem of eternal life, your brains will reel, your intellects will display their utter powerlessness to perform the task. If you endeavor to realize what it must be to go on living forever and forever, you cannot attain to a realization of immortality. Infinitude is so far beyond you that the very endeavor to solve the problem is only to prove to yourself the very limited powers of the human mind. As all great philosophers have said in the spirit, if not in the words of Newton, the more we know the more deeply conscious we are of our ignorance; the more we discover, the more conscious we become of how much yet remains to be discovered; and where the limit of human discovery is, no one can possibly determine.

Man is a creature whom none can fully comprehend. We apprehend human life everywhere; we everywhere behold existence; we know that being is; but there is forever something in your most intimate friends—in your mother, brother, sister or companion—which transcends your powers of comprehension; it is forever a mystery to you; the secrets of their inmost lives remaining forever their own alone. Though the nature be unscrupulous in its integrity, proverbial for its honesty; though deception be to it altogether a foreign element, still there is much within it that can never be thrown into words or made manifest in action. With every artist the picture is but a very feeble copy of the vision of his soul; with every

musician the rendition of his opera, symphony, or oratorio, is but a very imperfect representation of a far lovelier conception. The great painter, gazing upon his masterpiece, beholding the immense power it can exert over the admiring multitude, is himself dissatisfied with that which is to the mediocre mind a marvel of beauty and surpassing skill. It literally does portray a degree of attainment immeasurably beyond the possibilities of the delighted crowd who gaze upon it in awe-struck admiration, but to the artist himself it is immeasurably less than his possible attainment.

One thing we must always remember, and that is, that we cannot have too lofty an ideal; the loftier our ideal the better it will be for us, as the endeavor to attain unto it cannot be other than a most beneficial discipline. Even though we fail many times in struggling to reach it, we had better fail a million times than content ourselves with groveling. There can be nothing in a lofty ideal which does not elevate and inspire. If you enter the ranks of any profession, if you strive for success in any department of industry, always copy after those who have been preëminently great in that line of art or business. Always take the most perfect pictures for your guides. The most perfect musical compositions should, for instance, become familiar to the ears of the aspiring student. In the surroundings of children especially nothing faulty should be admitted if it can possibly be avoided, or much time and strength will be expended in unlearning error which could be put to better advantage in acquainting one's self with positive truth. Familiarization with the products of the greatest minds will cause one to abhor all that is vile and unworthy, and thus contribute to a purity of taste and sensitiveness of discrimination otherwise unattainable.

Hero-worship is a kind of worship which may be called secondary to the highest, the worship of the Infinite. Yet though not the highest, such worship is often useful, as the honors paid to heroes and heroines on account of their superior excellencies lead us to strive to emulate them, and thus assist us to become as great as they have been; but, remove from them their simple humanity, endow them with the attributes of divinity, consider them infallible or impeccable, and they become foes rather than incentives to progress. The worship of God, what is it? It is the worship of the Infinite All Good; whereas the worship of Jesus, Mary, or of any of the apostles, or of Wellington, Washington, Garfield, or any other man who stands above you in some particular line of development, should be simply the worship of the good within these persons, not the adoration of themselves. Why do you talk of Washington, of Lincoln, or of any other representative mind,

but because you feel that that mind contains and expresses something nobler than the ordinary minds you encounter everywhere? Why erect statues in honor of heroes and heroines? Surely because of their superiority of attainment in directions wherein yourselves desire to become eminent. The statues, lectures and biographies presented to your children, as well as to adults, are intended to assure others that they may become as great as these greatest in history if they will only imitate the course which led to their great achievements. Hero-worship, after all, divested of idolatry, is simply man's veneration for superior excellence. Human nature turns as naturally to that which is above it as the flowers turn toward the sun. If you worship a tyrannical God it might benefit you to become an Atheist, as the worship of nothing is preferable to the worship of a being whose attributes are cunning, intrigue, malice, caprice, and others usually considered as vices among men. If we worship anything lower than ourselves we shall descend to the level of that which we worship; if we worship what is higher than ourselves, then, by the very worship and admiration of the superior, we shall draw nearer and nearer to it; thus, every form of worship, no matter what may be the object of adoration, is either a lever to lift humanity, or a stone tied to the wing of a bird who might otherwise soar but is prevented by the incubus.

When speaking of the Coming Race, we assure you that the great idea of the amalgamation of all races lies at the foundation of the hope for the attainment of humanity's ideal. We talk of lost arts and sciences, but in truth there are none; all that has been found has been found forever; if men ever knew anything they know it now, as there is no retrogression in nature. All science tells us that the world is moving onward, never backward. We are told by some that Egypt, Persia and Hindostan have been seats of attainments altogether eclipsing those of modern civilization. Unless we are very explicit in eliminating from our statements that which is antipodal to the truth and destructive of the life of progressive energy and the greatest incentive to all progress, we must refuse to allow the validity of such claims. Who were the great men of days gone by? They were the expression of a sphere of souls. Here is a great man, in his normal capacity rather purer and more harmoniously framed than the majority; apart from inspiration he would never have exhibited the wonderful powers displayed by him. These were the result of his sympathetic union with a multitude of advanced souls, all eager to impart their knowledge to the earth. His receptivity to higher influences renders him the servant of the angelic. He is susceptible to the contagion of health rather than to disease; to the influ-

ences of morality rather than to those which tend to degradation. The whole earth and air is peopled with living presences, all acting upon man with an upward or downward tendency. We cannot be other than susceptible to something or to some one. By purity of thought and action we become imbued with celestial life, and by degraded feeling recipients of the influence emanating from the crude and malicious. A perfectly pure man would be a sun whence beams of truth, health and knowledge would radiate all over society; the invisible source of glory would, however, not be the individual perceived by mortal eyes, but a host of bright intelligences coöperating to bring to a focus their power to regenerate a world. Jesus says, It is not I, but the spirit of my Father, whom I express, that ye should honor. He constantly alludes to a power that is his superior in all things; yet this acknowledgment does not destroy his own individuality, or rob him of personal attainment. If there are any who tell you that to be useful in the world you must renounce your own individuality, their gospel is a veritable doctrine of devils. To refuse to develop one's abilities to the utmost limit of possibility when opportunity is afforded, is to destroy the very means whereby you can become most receptive to spiritual truth.

The true idea of life is this: we are all surrounded by influences, seen and unseen; we are all in some measure controlled by outside forces as well as by our own judgment and inclination. Some people express the wish to become exclusively the subject of their own desires; but we can neither live nor die to ourselves alone; we are all in a world in which we are dependent upon others; we receive from them influences, and to them we impart in return. You cannot live entirely by yourselves and of yourselves. The very food you eat, the clothes you wear, the house you dwell in, all of these necessary things are provided for you by the concentrated industry of a large number of individuals external to yourself. In all these things you are constantly imbibing the life-emanations of those who have provided you with these necessities. This fact can be clearly demonstrated in ordinary experience: when certain people prepare your food you will rise from the table feeling healthy and happy, go to your business smiling on every one you meet, and do a successful day's work. When some one else prepares it the effect is altogether the reverse; you become ill at ease, dyspeptic, irritable and morose. Thus your frowns and failures in your day's work are largely attributable to the indigestible meal served to you in the morning. You are in this case the victim of the malign influences of others, and will be until you have risen into a higher state of being, wherein you will be alone susceptible to superior forces. Though many are not sufficiently

intelligent and sensitive to define the causes of their depression or exaltation, none can fail to be influenced by that which corresponds to a condition in themselves. Every person entering this hall brings with him an influence which he leaves in the air of it when he departs, and which will influence future frequenters of this building.

Without entering into the doctrines of Spiritualism, except in so far as they relate to this present life and world, we can none of us deny the spiritualistic affirmation concerning the intercourse between spirits. Those who do not recognize a spirit-world for man after the death of the body must accept the basic idea in the Spiritual Philosophy—that of the communion of minds and the contagion of forces. To declare that life is everlastingly perpetuated in individual form, is to declare that which alone divides intelligent beings into the contending schools of spiritualistic and materialistic thought. The utility of aspiration consists in this—that you attract whatsoever you seek. Physically speaking, if you go through the world head downwards you are far more likely to become diseased than when your gaze is directed upward. If you are forever stooping to the earth you become negative to the vapors arising from it. The dampness and impurities proceeding from the ground are a fruitful source whence hosts of ailments spring. It is a physiological fact that many have died of consumption because they have not thrown back their shoulders and looked upward; by constant stooping they have rendered themselves so susceptible to the earth that their bodies have soon become unable to live above it. It is a distinguishing trait of man that he stands erect, while other animals always look downward. This upward posture is the distinguishing glory of humanity, regarded physically. The cure for a large number of maladies afflicting the race to-day is the direction of the eye sunward. The science of Anthropology can teach you how to use your every faculty so that every member of your frame can do an increasing amount of work, with an ever-diminishing expenditure of energy; in one posture work is hard labor, in another simply active enjoyment; in no way can we become so perfect as by incessantly directing our gaze and our thoughts to the immensities revealed in the sky above us instead of to the dark speck of earth at our feet, which limits our horizon when looking toward it.

What is the outer universe but the envelope of the inner? If you have seen the Greek play, you will have been struck with the beauty of Grecian apparel in this particular; it is so worn that the emotions of the mind are exhibited through the movements of the garments; when the wearers are feeling intensely, these movements render their emotions unmistakable.

The physical universe is the garment of the spiritual, so constructed and worn that every movement of spirit is registered in some effect produced outwardly. Thus all material forms simply register the workings of the intelligence hidden from external observation, constituting what many psychometrists have designated the "soul of things." The spirit-world is the world whence man came into material life, and to which he will return when death despoils him of his earthly tenement. If this be a truth—and to all experienced in spiritual things it is an incontrovertible fact, a self-evident truth—we cannot reiterate too frequently that by constant association with that which is the abode and product of an inferior grade of spiritual unfoldment, we become affiliated with its producer; hence the most scrupulous cleanliness, the utmost attention to all sanitary laws and physiological requirements, cannot be too highly eulogized as a successful means of reaching the sublimest heights of moral or spiritual attainment. Everything in nature is an embodiment of some of the varying attributes of spirit which express themselves everywhere, separately or imperfectly, until at length they all unite in the person of man.

What is man? Man is the epitome of everything in nature, and contains everything that nature holds in her three kingdoms below him. As an animal he has more elements in his composition than any other creature. He is immortal because he is the whole, while lower beings are only parts. As scientists tell you everything is found in the human organism that can possibly be discovered outside, even so in human intelligence everything is discovered that is discoverable in sub-human intelligence. If we could find anything outside of man we cannot find in him, we should argue for the appearance of a superior race of creatures who should supersede man on the planet; but when all that goes to make up the world of intelligence and matter is epitomized in man, man is susceptible of unlimited improvement; he never passes his meridian, he is never known to arrive at intellectual maturity, his means of progression are illimitable; and thus, as man, he represents the complete epitomization and amalgamation of all the forces of nature. As man as a species or family owes his dignity to this amalgamation, even so the highest type of manhood, the loftiest race of men, will be that race which unites in itself the excellencies of all races that have preceded it.

The perfect man is neither a German, a Grecian, a Spaniard, an Egyptian, nor an Anglo-Saxon, but a cosmopolitan. Go to Egypt and gaze upon the wonderful works of antique civilization, and as you stand transfixed with admiring awe before the great pyramid, the obelisks, and other marvels of ancient skill, while gazing upon

their matchless perfection as exact models of architectural design, you will be led to exclaim, Oh, that we were as advanced in mathematical precision, in geometric accuracy, as were these old Egyptians! With what consummate and seemingly unapproachable skill have they erected these gorgeous piles. But these structures only portray one side of Egyptian life. Go back four thousand or five thousand years. Would you like despotism? One man on the throne while millions are in captivity? Do you wish that your great public edifices should be erected by one hundred thousand slaves, as the historian Herodotus declares was the great pyramid of Gizeh? Do you desire this cringing submission of a multitude to a man? Would you not shrink away in horror from the thought of the eminence of a very small minority coexistent with the captivity of a very large majority? This wonderful Egyptian attainment was the property of priests and nobles alone; they in time abused it, making it an excuse for tyranny; hence their thrones are vacant; their power has fled; but whither? Go to Egypt to-day, and you will find it comparatively a wilderness; monumental remains alone testify to its bygone glory. But turn your eyes over Europe; glance on America; and there you behold in resurrected forms, covering a vast area, blessing myriads of beings, the very knowledge which appeared so wonderful when monopolized by a few. Its soul abides forever. The wisdom of the ancients is largely the inspiration of our works to-day; unconfin'd it stalks abroad over the earth, sharing itself between peer and peasant, and threatening full soon to annihilate all aristocracy and nobility other than that of intelligence and spirituality.

To use a simple illustration to account for the failure of many to perceive the continued existence of the so-called lost arts and sciences, not finding to-day among Anglo-Saxons and other moderns such surprising cases of individual skill as among the ancients, we will call your attention to an amount of money in the possession of an individual. It is a huge pile of one million dollars. How gigantic it appears when you see it altogether. Though this wealth may receive constant additions, so soon as you divide it among a multitude the large pile ceases to exist; it has divided itself into many smaller piles, each one comparatively insignificant when viewed alone. One of the most fruitful causes of poverty, crime, and a host of kindred evils, is the fabulous wealth of the Vanderbilts and the Rothschilds, while thousands are devoid of the barest necessities of existence. To divide the wealth of a millionaire between a million people would be to give each only one dollar, a very insignificant sum, so small as to be useless for any great enterprise; but the country would be no poorer for

this subdivision. The knowledge of the ancients in its dispersion among the nations is like the broken pile of money; it has never decreased, but has, on the contrary, received perpetual additions; yet when we next behold vast accumulations of individual artistic or intellectual treasure, these heaps of knowledge will be legion, whereas they formerly were the property of so few that you could easily count their possessors.

We have had our remarkable men and nations; and these appear most singular because of the contrast they offer to all around them. It now appears that all the nations of the Old World are descending the hill of time, while America alone is ascending it, because she is not one nation simply but an aggregation of fragments of all nations. America represents humanity as a whole rather than simply a single section of the race, therefore she is constantly rising higher and higher, and will continue to do so as she becomes increasingly representative. The admission of foreigners into this land is the secret of its power. Refuse hospitality to the stranger, enact laws forbidding intermarriage, and the day is not far distant when Columbia's sun shall sink behind the western hills, that a freer and more comprehensive people may arise to possess the earth. We are on the verge of a new music, a new art, a new philosophy, a new science, a new government, a new literature, a new religion; the Coming Race will unite the excellencies of many schools in one comprehensive school. In painting the excellencies of Raphael, Rubens and all others of the world's renowned painters will appear in the pictures of the future; in its music the triumphant jubilation of Mendelssohn, the pathetic tenderness and sublimity of Beethoven, the florid jubilation of Mozart, the transcendent subtleties of Schumann and Schubert, the struggles after definite ideas representing the German composers of the later schools, the solid grandeur of Handel and Haydn, these and all other acknowledged beauties of style and expression, separately characterizing individual masters, will be united in the grand symphonies of the coming age. Do you not feel the approaching advent of a national American literature, more cosmopolitan and less rigorous than any existing literature? Take, for instance, that of the decidedly English, French, or German type; there is something peculiarly captivating and beautiful in each separate school and master which is found in no other; unite the members of the varied nations out of which these schools have sprung and to whom these masters belonged, and this national interblending will most surely evolve a race of men and women whose productions will portray the universality of the source whence their being was derived.

The religion of the coming race, upon which

we shall speak next Sunday, will be neither a following of Jesus, of Mohammed, of Buddha, of Zoroaster, of Swedenborg, or of any other individual centre of spiritual light on earth. Neither Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, nor any other system, embodies the whole truth which can be accepted by humanity. While truth is eternal, its form is incessantly varying, the measure of human receptivity constantly increasing, and in the coming race we expect to behold not one system of thought alone triumphant, but the truth that is within all lib-

erated and permitted to flow over the earth, until all people shall rejoice in the light, and Divine Wisdom shall cover the earth as the waters cover the ocean bed.

[The unusual brevity of this lecture is attributable to the following circumstance: The extreme inclemency of the weather preventing most of the regular attendants at Berkeley Hall from being present on the previous Sunday, half the usual lecture hour was devoted to a substantial recapitulation of the previous Sunday's discourse.]

BERKELEY HALL LECTURES.

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Delivered Sunday Morning, Sept. 18th, 1881.

No. 2—Why was our President Taken Away?

Delivered by Spirit E. H. Chapin, Sept. 26th, 1881.

No. 3—President Garfield Living After Death.

Delivered Sunday, Oct. 2d, 1881.

No. 4—The Spiritual Temple: And How to Build It.

Delivered Sunday, Oct. 9th, 1881.

No. 5—Houses of God and Gates of Heaven.

Delivered Sunday, Oct. 16th, 1881.

No. 6—The Gods of the Past and the God of the Future.

Delivered Sunday, Oct. 23d, 1881.

No. 7—Spirit E. V. Wilson's Answer to Prof. Phelps.

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No. 8—In Memory of Our Departed Friends.

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No. 9—The True Gift of Healing: How we May all Exercise It.

Delivered Sunday, Nov. 20th, 1881.

No. 10—The Restoration of the Devil.

Delivered Sunday, Nov. 20th, 1881.

No. 11—The Blessedness of Gratitude.

Delivered Thursday, Nov. 24th, 1881.

No. 12—The Tares and the Wheat.

Delivered Sunday, Nov. 27th, 1881.

No. 13—Natural and Revealed Religion.

Delivered Sunday, Dec. 4th, 1881.

No. 14—The True Basis and Best Methods of Spiritual Organisation.

Delivered Sunday, Dec. 11th, 1881.

No. 15—What kind of Religious Organisation will best Supply the Needs of the Hour?

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No. 16—The Origin, History and Meaning of the Christmas Festival.

Delivered Sunday, Dec. 25th, 1881.

No. 17—The New Year, its Hopes, Promises, and Duties.

Delivered Sunday, Jan. 1st, 1882.

No. 18—Death in the Light of the Spiritual Philosophy.

Delivered Sunday, Jan. 8th, 1882.

No. 19—The Coming Physicians and Healing Institutes.

Delivered Sunday, Jan. 15th, 1882.

No. 20—The Coming Race.

Delivered Sunday, Feb. 12th, 1882.

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THE RELIGION OF THE COMING RACE.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

INVOCATION.

Supreme and Universal Spirit! Fountain of Reason! Source of Light! To thee our hearts would ever turn as turn the flowers toward the sun. We wait with eager minds and longing hearts for a fuller revelation from thee. Infinite Soul of Truth! We do not look for the greatest signs of the new coming of truth in the physical firmament, but rather for changes in government, in religion, and in social life. If with these interior changes we are confronted with material difficulties, may we through all these press boldly forward to that higher life which is beyond; and, whether our talents be many or few, whether our opportunities be great or small, whether we be called to sit on thrones or to dwell in the lowest places of earth, may we know that when conscience says within the human breast, "Well done, good and faithful servant," thou hast spoken; and though creeds may change, though books pass into oblivion, though superstitions and institutions of men be no more, that thou thyself, in thy ever-living spirit, dwellest within man; and that when conscience pronounces the promise of happiness, that then thou art speaking, and we hear thy voice within ourselves. And thus while gladly acknowledging the beautiful character of the seers and sages of ages gone by—they who have done their utmost for the salvation of the world—while rejoicing in the good influence they have exerted, in the rich legacy which they have left behind them, which is now the property of humanity, while rejoicing, also, in the influences that reach us from ascended spirits in their higher homes, may we all remember that vicarious atonement is not offered to us; that thy wrath never needs to be appeased, for thou canst never be angry; but if we would be saved through any instrumentality, that the instrumentalities of our salvation must flow from our coöperation with all that is great and good in nature; and so may we open our hearts to receive the light, open our windows to receive the air, that the sunlight and air of truth and love, always existing, shall crown our prayers, and fill our souls with thine own perfection. We do not come to thee, oh thou Infinite One, that we may ask thee to alter thy laws; we do not pray unto

thee to do anything thou wouldst not do did we not pray; but by the aspirations of our hearts let us dismiss every care, throw away from us all that binds us to the sod, and opening our hearts in holy thought and aspiration, pave the way for a realization of thy presence; so may our prayers be the efforts of a life; acts of kindness freely showered on all that are in need; the giving of bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, and consolation to the distressed. And then, when thou comest in thy kingdom, oh thou Perfect Truth, we will not be afraid of thy all-piercing glance, for we know that they who have been faithful in the obligations of life shall enter into the joy of the eternal.

Unto thee, the Infinite Wisdom, the Infinite Love, whom, failing to comprehend, we nevertheless apprehend at all times, we will offer all praise in our holiness of life, and thought, and soul; and that this sacrifice of the spirit we offer in truth may rise forever acceptably unto thee, we invoke the assistance of all pure and holy influences, terrestrial and superterrestrial, as we journey through this and every life; and thus in making the world happier and holier, may we glorify thy infinite holiness and infinite happiness in time and through eternity. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

Last Sunday, in our discourse on the Coming Race, we left the subject just where and when a dissertation on the peculiarities of the future inhabitants of the earth was merging into an inquiry concerning the future of religion; to-day we address ourselves particularly to the subject of religion and its future.

As you are well aware, we have always contended earnestly for the unity and divinity of religion itself, while theologies and philosophies are multitudinous, conflicting and purely human. In every so-called religious system, germs of religion itself may be found, and our prediction to-day is that these germs will be

collected until they form one great system, in which practical work, in the spirit of wisdom and love, will forever banish discord and strife from off the face of the earth. Go to the poor dweller in the wilds of Africa and watch him as he worships tree or stone, stick or bird. Is there no loveliness in these natural objects? Is there nothing in association with them which tends to awaken and unfold the highest sensibilities of human nature? The poor Fetish-worshiper cannot rise to all the transcendental heights to which some of you have arisen; he cannot philosophize on the mysteries of evolution, as you can; he cannot by the aid of science, enlightened judgment and spiritual intuition, as well as by reference to history, discover good in everything, no matter how dark and dreadful it may be, as the wisest and most spiritual of the teachers and thinkers of this age can. The poor African simply gazes upon objects around him. Nature in many of her forms is so beautiful that his admiration for this beauty leads him to adore its forms; but is there not a dark as well as a bright side to Nature?

Man instinctively and universally fears that which he cannot understand; he believes that every inexplicable phenomenon inimical to his immediate welfare is the work of an avenging and cruel force resident in the universe, ever seeking to destroy him, and therefore he worships devils as well as deities, fearing that if the latter are not propitiated they will destroy him.

According to the highest philosophy of existence, that which appears at first sight to be a devil, a something wholly evil, is only the shadow of an approaching angel of progress, cast before him on his onward march. As soon as men have been able to closely inspect the devil they have admired him, endorsed his theories and made use of all his inventions; for it is to the devil, according to the fears and superstitions of humanity, at the time when the most important discoveries were made, that we owe the discovery of this continent, steam, the printing press, telegraphy, and, indeed, every branch of civilization and instrument of scientific culture. According to the statements of our ancestors, the devil gave us so many things that are good, that, if he exist as a person, we shall miss a great deal if we fail to make his acquaintance and become on friendly terms with him. Almost every blessing in science and art that we enjoy came from the devil. And what is this devil? Surely naught else than the shadow of a higher manifestation of the divine life. The shadow cast before an approaching angel may not always be bright; your friends when coming to see you often cast as dark shadows on their pathway as do your enemies; and in the darkness of fear and morbid excitement it is most natural to confound your benefactors

with your enemies, until you see their faces and recognize their intentions.

Even though you admit, as you must all admit, that there is much of sin and suffering yet in the world, we may rest assured that all sin and all suffering are but leading humanity higher and higher up the pathway of experimental effort, the only road leading to everlasting conscious bliss. The ultimate attainment of man is his arrival at a state of being when he no longer desires to do other than the right, and can no more be tempted, as lower things have no more a fascination for him: when the human soul, with its voluntary powers in full exercise, shall be as pure as it was in the days of its pristine innocence, when its goodness was simply involuntary. The child is an involuntary innocent, and all the discipline of life between infancy and mature age is a struggle which leads the mind from an involuntary to a voluntary surrender into the hands of all that is divinely. The religion of bygone races was largely a religion of fear; the religion of the coming race is to be a religion of love and wisdom united. Men in bygone ages worshiped God because they feared that if they did not worship him he would punish them; they were terrified at the very thought of God. "Our God is a consuming fire" is a text quoted times without number by those who have thundered forth the wrath of the Infinite in the ears of trembling humanity:

Ministers, in the name of religion, have frightened people almost out of their wits in their representations of Deity as a perfect fiend. Parents and Sunday school teachers have shamefully misquoted the beautiful text, "Thou God seest me," as they have represented God as an all-seeing eye of vengeance, peering into the inmost crevices of the child's heart; watching him in the dark when his mother could not see him, ever on the alert to discover and punish the slightest departure from the severe line of duty. God has been represented to childhood more as a spy, ever ready to discover flaws and bring the miscreant to justice, than as a wise and tender parent, only solicitous for the welfare of his offspring. Whatever may be said in opposition to the atheism of to-day, it is infinitely preferable to that kind of theism which presents God as an almighty fiend and avenger. The words "Thou God seest me" are taken from a portion of scripture introducing to us the consolations springing from a realizing sense of the Divine Omniscience, to a man in the lowest depths of affliction, misunderstood, persecuted and cruelly deserted by all earthly helpers. The thought of the All-seeing God conveyed to him unspeakable comfort, assuring him that Infinite Goodness saw and understood him when no earthly friend was nigh. Those words find place in biblical literature to voice the experience of one who was conscious of his

own rectitude and in otherwise utter desolation was kept alive and energetic by this knowledge of God ever present to analyze his motives and reward him in the right time when his painful conflict in defense of truth should be ended.

All the greatest men and women, seers, saints and prophets, have ever been condemned by a multitude too gross to recognize any goodness or truth in minds immeasurably superior to their own; in utter destitution of earthly sympathy all the world's greatest benefactors have derived incalculable comfort when they could confidently exclaim, without a doubt, "Thou God seest me." Mortals did not really see them, they only beheld appearances. A soul that can look above earth and exclaim, "Thou Infinite Spirit beholdest reality, men judge me from their standpoints, and cannot know my motives; my conscience compels me to act as I do; I know that thou art working in my conscience, and that it is thy voice that I hear and obey," has ever at hand a panacea for every earthly woe, a stronghold in weakness and temptation, an inspiration to that almost supernatural courage which has led so many otherwise weak men, yea, and women also, to press on, unfalteringly even, to the bitter end, enabling them to quaff the bitterest cups, even to the very dregs; never shrinking from torture—nor even death itself in its most fearful forms, frightening them from their purpose to secure truth at all costs. Now if you will utterly refuse to instill into the minds of your children any ideas of a wrathful deity, and place before them as an inspiration to courage, obedience and every virtue, the knowledge of an ever-present, watchful and loving God as their father and friend, you will be doing what the inspired writer of the words we have alluded to intended they should teach. Let them realize that an infinite eye is ever looking upon them in love, kindly registering all that is good in them, then you may place upon the walls of your homes and schoolhouses the text, "Thou God seest me," which, if properly interpreted, will tend to develop and elevate the child's nature, calling forth all that is best and noblest therein, by the realization that life is ever open to the inspection of the infinitely good, and that infinite goodness will always give credit for every endeavor after the attainment of virtue.

One thing is plain: if you wish people to be very noble you must give them full credit for all the nobility that is in them; and if you wish them to be very wicked you must tell them and everybody else that they are so, and they will, in many instances, soon become just as bad as you say they are. The tendency to good must be recognized as inherent in every one, as every one is born into righteousness, as well as born into iniquity. Every person is born both with perfections and imperfections; with aspi-

rations which tend upward, and also with predilections tending downward. If you will constantly give people credit for the good they do, you will make it easier for them to rise; whereas, if you are always reminding them of their faults, then you are largely responsible for the villainy you arouse by calling incessant attention to it. Direful indeed are the consequences attending perpetual fault-finding. By pointing to that which is high and holy you foster it; many a man owes his reclamation to the kind words and generous comments of those who always put the best possible construction upon all his words and actions. The recognition of goodness wherever it exists helps it to attain empire in society, and precisely in the same way and to the same extent does a constant dwelling upon vice lead to its propagation. Those books whose authors are forever painting human nature in its blackest shades give encouragement to crime rather than tend to prevent it. There is no surer way of making a person ashamed of his vices than by constantly crediting him with virtue.

Now what will be the religion of the coming race? It will rest upon the recognition of the infinite All Good, and the recognition, further, of the possibility of our arriving at perfect oneness with this infinite goodness, by constant aspirations toward it. By our constant aspirations we shall constantly become receptive to those divine emanations which are everywhere freely bestowed upon us if we will open our hearts and minds to receive them. In the reading to which you have listened this morning, (the earlier portions of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew,) you have been introduced to one man with five talents, to another with two, and to a third with one. You behold in this illustration how the great teacher explains that it is not the outward measure of attainment that registers the degree of one's spiritual or moral perfection; but that motive and active exertion form the only criterion by which humanity will be judged. If you have only one talent and another has one hundred, you can enter into the kingdom of heaven with two talents, and occupy as exalted a position there as will your neighbor if he enters with two hundred, because he could just as easily acquire one hundred with his one hundred, as you could procure one with your one; your acquisition, therefore, is as great, morally speaking, as his.

It is to the amount of moral force expended that justice looks when she deals out her rewards, not to the simple progress made in the eyes of men. The amount of love one has for goodness is the measure of one's elevation in the scale of moral perfection. We must never fail to draw a clear line of demarcation between positive and negative goodness. Conduct, behavior, is very frequently largely due to cir-

cumstances over which men have almost no control; outward mannerisms and even opinions are largely attributable to hereditary tendencies, early education and surroundings; but the effort of the soul to rise to heavenly heights, the effort of the spirit to rid itself of every incubus—that is what forms character.

If you could only behold the spirits who leave the material form every day; could you but see the places they occupy in the spirit-world, how surprised you would be, as you beheld in many instances a perfect reversal of all earthly orders by the angel of transition. Very often a popular minister of the gospel who has enjoyed a stainless reputation, a deacon who has never been absent from the prayer-meeting, one who has been loudest in his prayers, a church-member in "good and regular standing," who has never failed to receive the communion on sacrament Sunday, one who has given the very largest contributions in support of the gospel, who has led a most virtuous life outwardly and done everything expected of him by society: such upon entering into the spirit-world with their cloaks off, appear but as poor beggars; whereas many men and women not deemed good enough for association with so-called respectable parties, who were forbidden to mingle with the nominally pure—when divested of their cloaks, appear among spirits whose elevation is immeasurably above that of their self-righteous judges. One wore the cloak of hypocrisy, the other the cloak of an ill-starred organism; one struggled to keep his cloak on that he might disguise his real self from the world, while the other strove hard to cast off his cloak, but it was so intimately connected with him from before his birth that he could only gradually cast it aside. You saw sin in the one, but only varnish and whitewash in the other; but where you saw the sin, angels beheld, also, a noble effort to overcome it; and where you saw the external beauty they beheld the internal corruption.

We may say, if you like the expression, that the religion of the coming race will only be the religion of Jesus, divested of foreign attachments; but this religion is also the religion of all the great seers and sages, both of antiquity and modern times. Christianity, in its primitive form, was simply an effort to exalt the spirit of the golden rule; and, although it is true that religion is very old, its antiquity is in no way objectionable, as truth is eternal. In distant times a few individuals tried to live by this golden rule, and there are yet some who attain to this ideal life; but essentially, religion is entirely new to any community to which it appeals, as no nation or community has ever even tried to practice the sublime teachings, however much it has eulogized them in speech or literature. When Jesus says "A new commandment give I unto you," he means that he

gives them commandment to live a new life, as no nation or community has ever acted up to this gospel, and the endeavor to do so will be of necessity a new work.

The churches of Christendom have patterned after Paul, and endeavored to live in accordance with his teachings, as set forth in his epistles. Clergymen to-day read from Corinthians, Ephesians and Galatians, more than from the Gospels. We may, possibly, make an exception in favor of ministers of the liberal churches, whose teachings far more nearly approach those of Jesus than the teachings of any of the so-called Evangelical divines, who have entered upon learned disquisitions concerning Oriental subtleties, Grecian and Roman philosophies and Jewish ceremonials. Go to the ordinary Evangelical churches, and you will find that the epistles, rather than the Gospels, are the foundations upon which rest their creeds and whence they draw inspiration for conduct. Now the coming religion will be a departure from the epistles to the Gospels—a going from Paul to Jesus; it will be rising from the sphere of a scholarly wrangler, who is always endeavoring to reconcile contending schools in the matter of ceremonials and the non-essentials of worship generally, unto that of those great teachers of the true Gospel who have ever made the soul of religion the important matter, the one thing needful, leaving ceremonial particulars to adjust themselves.

Every truly inspired teacher speaks right home to the conscience of the assembly he addresses, while minor teachers deal principally with externals. The religion of the coming race will be the religion of the prophets and representatives of the coming race whose appearances have been few and far between, from the earliest ages until to-day. When we speak of saviours, messiahs, or avatars, we signify men whose attainments spiritually have been so great that they have been utterly incomprehensible to all ordinary minds; and yet there have always been a few prepared spirits who have been ready to welcome the new truths these great revelators have brought to light. We do not regard Jesus as anything more than a man, but he and others similar to him have epitomized in their single individualities the excellencies of all races, and presented a concrete picture of human possibility. They were, though only men, perfect men ere they quitted the mortal frame, and what they have become you may each and all become; and thus the religion of the exceptional men of the past will be the universal religion of the men of the future, as these coming men shall be so far above the ordinary men of the past, and even of the present, that the extraordinary men of the past shall but stand side by side with the ordinary man who is yet to be. Those who have been

styled gods in the past were only exceptional persons, rulers, and their spirit-guides were once called deities and worshiped as such.

The true idea of progress leads us to this conclusion: we have had once in a while a remarkable personage representing man's future; we have fallen down and worshiped him as a god. By our admiration of him, coupled with our endeavor to become like him, we shall at length evolve a race like unto him, and possibly in the very far future behold beings on this planet who will exhibit a yet greater diversity of excellence than has ever as yet gladdened the eyes of earthly beholders. The religion of the coming race shall be a religion of the intellect, as well as of the soul; it shall honor and employ reason, even while it transcends; it shall make ordinary men what Messiahs only have been in the past. There have been on earth a few who have beheld and lived in the enjoyment of this coming religion. For the most part they have been spurned by their contemporaries, as mediocrity usually is envious and spiteful toward all that is its superior. Individual benefactors, both public and private, have fulfilled the law of love. These have not infrequently been called fools for their pains, for while the pulpit has often read the utterances of Jesus in the lesson, it has taken a text from Paul, and preached a sermon leading to a practical nullification of the Gospel it professes to honor and expound. While it has told all men in the reading that they are to love all, and judge none, appealing only to the finer susceptibilities of human nature, it has neutralized this appeal during the sermon by advocating a totally opposite course. It has sanctioned those who have devised instruments of torture as a means of retaliation, even going to the extent of eulogizing the gallows, when the Sermon on the Mount most emphatically protests against taking a member of the body to avenge the loss of a member, and by this clearly and unsparingly denounces the hideous crime of capital punishment.

Passing to the consideration of methods of healing, akin to those of Jesus, we should like to see a passage of scripture authorizing men to endeavor to suppress the healing of the sick by any means other than those in vogue with regular medical practitioners. We should like to hear all about the medical colleges founded by Jesus, or obedient to his command, by his earliest followers; all about the diplomas they issued, without the possession of which he forbade his disciples to heal the sick; we should like to know the names of the drugs and minerals necessary to the cure of disease, and employed by Jesus and his followers in the act of healing physical and mental infirmities and in the exorcism of evil spirits; we should simply like to have these things pointed out to us, as we can find no mention of them in the Bible or

in the history of the works of the primitive Christians. If our study of the gospels, etc., has been so lamentably imperfect that in our reading we have neglected to notice the most important statements of the Nazarene, we only ask that our errors may be rectified as those whose desire it is to lead souls into a knowledge of the truth; prove to us wherein we are mistaken.

Surely Christians ought to be satisfied with the authority of their God for any practice; and all we ask them to do in justification of their enormous pretensions is to prove that their God acted and recommended them to act as they are now acting in many places, in their attitude toward the revival of apostolic gifts among the people. If they can only prove to us that their course is consistent, that Jesus has advocated it, we will promise at once to become their disciples and enter their schools, submitting to their every rule; but this we are convinced they can never do, though they move all created things in their zeal to establish their position. Let them fairly establish it, and we promise to fight with all the powers we own or can derive in their interests, under their flag, against every one who dares to do what, with our present light, it certainly appears Jesus told every one to do who wished to be his disciple. If we find that the instruments of death which are to-day brought to such wonderful perfection are the result of a careful following of the teachings of Jesus, if he commanded us to do so, let us erect a scaffold, let us hang our criminals; if Jesus told us to do so, then every Christian is bound to follow his master. If the nation pride itself upon being Christian, it is to be admired for the course it invariably pursues in its attitude toward criminals; but for a Christian nation, honoring Jesus with the lips, to practice retaliation in its most awful form, *i. e.*, to execute the death penalty, is for it to declare in the very eyes of the whole world that it regards Jesus in the light of a fanatic or an impostor. Every time a man is hung in a Christian land, with the consent of a Christian government, unrebuked by a Christian ministry, the spectacle in the eyes of every dispassionate looker-on is that of a host of the enemies of the Christ arraying themselves against him in defiant scorn, and hissing in his ears: "Thou Impostor!" We are willing to face any and every learned divine or theologian, philosopher or legislator in the world with that assertion, knowing that our position is invincible and our logic unanswerable. It is an insult to Jesus—an insult no atheist would think of offering to him—to thus act in direct contradiction to his most emphatic command under guise of friendship to him, and while professing to defend his honor in the world.

The religion of the coming race is to be a

religion of consistency, while systematic Christianity is a conglomeration of the most flagrant and blasphemous inconsistencies; a system that is fast completely losing its hold upon civilized peoples, and making but little progress in its costly and herculean efforts to convert all whom it contemptuously denominates heathen; telling its clergy to obey Jesus as he is represented in the Gospels, and in the same breath compelling them to disobey his commands or be turned out of the church, as every minister not occupying an exceptionally high position, or holding an impregnable fortress, has been hounded out of the church of his fathers so soon as he dared to be sufficiently consistent to preach a sermon from a Gospel text, agreeing with the spirit and words of the great hero whose utterances are at one with all the clearest dictates of human conscience and moral sense, so far as they touch morals. A charge of heresy is brought against every man who is consistent in his course, as he strives to do the things commanded by Jesus, while he calls him Lord. It is the religion of inconsistency that is passing away, while the religion of Jesus will abide forever.

The religion of the Coming Race will not call itself Christianity, as the term is altogether too indefinite, restrictive and sectarian to imply a faith not founded upon the words of any man, but upon the authority of the aggregate con-

science of the most developed spirits among humanity. The Christian must have a biblical sanction for everything; thus if the Bible be destroyed or be found defective or incorrect, the doctrine founded upon it is at once unseated, it may be false, but if the new religion discards the notion of individual and biblical infallibility, and rests upon the light within the breasts of living men and women, it can never be shaken, it can fear no fall, it lives because conscience lives, and is coexistent with God's living bibles, his intelligent children. This thought sums up our consideration of the coming religion; it shall be the concentrated excellence of all existing and departed systems; it shall have no restrictive form of government and worship; it shall be no sect or denomination; shall have no distinctive name, for religion is far too large to be embodied in a creed or to be fettered with a title other than an infinite one.

The expressions of the religion of humanity may be manifold, as it adapts itself to the varying spiritual and other needs of the whole race, while its predecessors have at best but satisfied the needs of a section.

That this new and yet ever old religion, the religion of love and the religion of wisdom, may be the possession in which you all rejoice, is our earnest prayer for each and all of you.

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NEW BOTTLES FOR NEW WINE; OR, THE TRUE WORK OF THE RELIGIOUS REFORMER.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1832.

Having been requested by some of our friends to speak for a few Sunday mornings from some noted texts of Scripture which have long given rise to controversy, fraught with inestimable value to all who are endeavoring to obtain truth from all available sources, we select this morning for our text the following passage:

"And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred; but new wine must be put into new bottles."—*Mark 11: 22.*

We consider the Bible to be a very good book—a valuable collection of ancient manuscripts; but the genuineness, authenticity and authority of the various books composing the Bible must be regarded as various as are the books themselves. We do not approach the Bible in any other spirit than that in which we approach the writings of Thomas Paine or those of Shakespeare or Voltaire. If we find anything in the Bible preferable to anything we find in Shakespeare, we are willing to acknowledge that it carries the palm, and that it is superior to Shakespeare's utterances. If the words of Isaiah or Jeremiah contain anything transcending in beauty and vivid reality the words of Ernest Renan, or any other modern author, then we allow that these old Jewish prophets are superior to their modern critics, merely because the intrinsic excellency of their productions renders them more precious to our souls and minds. To us the Bible stands or falls upon its own merits. The Bible is only one book out of many, and in order to get good from it we must approach it with no more reverence and no less than that with which we approach other writings. We must go to the Bible with-

out any preconceived ideas either in its favor or against it, if we would draw from it the real light which it is capable of casting o'er our pathway. If the Bible is to be to us a fount of inspiration and source of knowledge, then all the glamour which ages have thrown around it must be removed; all superstitious veneration for it must be forever overthrown, and the Bible, like any other book, must allow itself to be criticised and passed judgment upon. If it is of God it will stand forever; if it is of something less than God it will not eternally remain. If some parts of it are the word of God, those portions nothing can ever destroy; if other portions of it are but the words of finite fallible men, often foolish and ignorant, these parts have no permanence.

A similar view must be taken of Jesus. To us he is a man; one of ourselves; a man born in the ordinary way, with parents, educated in a village of Palestine, allowed to unfold his spiritual possibilities through the discipline of persecution, a discipline seemingly needed by all who are to become anything truly great in the world of morals. Jesus, if he were anything more than an ordinary man, was not born extraordinary, but made himself that which he became by a life displaying throughout its course the loftiest nobility of character, manifested in his untiring efforts to secure the welfare of others. If he rose to the heights of supernal glory, it was by self-abnegation, disinterested kindness. The road he traversed is the road upon which you may all march to a victory as illustrious as his. Jesus stands before us simply as one of the great teachers of the world. If he be acknowledged the greatest, it must not be because we have any particular

predisposition in his favor, but simply because, judging of him as we judge of others, we find more that appeals to our inmost sense of right in him than in others; more that is really elevating in his teachings. If we do not find this, then he is no unique saviour.

The New Religion, as we said last Sunday, will be a religion of work, not of profession; a religion of effort for the elevation of humanity—not of creed and ceremony. The great question now demanding solution at the hands of the Christian Church is simply this: Is religion a creed or a life? It is demanding an answer everywhere, and liberal-minded men in the Methodist and other Evangelical churches, declaring it to be a life, and boldly stating their views to their congregations, have been compelled to withdraw from the communion by the authoritative decision of councils. If they have not been wise enough to depart of their own accord, the anathemas of synods and councils have hounded them out of the church of their fathers because they have dared to place morality before blind credulity. All truly advanced teachers have been through all the Christian centuries frowned upon as infidels by those who have been so miserably narrow in their conceptions that they have regarded every one as infidel who possessed faith in a God with a heart large enough to embrace others of his children than those who assented to the creed of Orthodoxy. All the greatest men who have ever lived in Christian lands have been denounced as infidel—and why? Because these men have been satisfied with belief in a perfectly good God, and with this truth, so infinitely large, they did not trouble themselves about minor articles of faith. Thomas Paine was a devout theist; he believed in God and worshiped him; and believed that to do good was alone acceptable to the Supreme. Voltaire was by no means an atheist, but also a devout theist, and one who did not disdain the use of prayer, as after his decease prayers written by him were discovered which are sublime theistic addresses to the Infinite Power who rules all things wisely and well. The greatest thinkers condemned by the Church have rarely been materialists; for the most part they have been ardent theists, relying on Infinite goodness. Feeling no need of an intercessor or mediator to come between themselves and the author of their being, believing that they could enter the kingdom of heaven in no other way than through the gate of their own voluntary compliance with the divine law of love, they dispensed with all the accessories common to Christian fear and superstition.

The great question of to-day is, Shall religion be established in the land, or shall the people bow in prostrate adoration before a false theology which would assume the place true religion alone should occupy. Shall we bow down

before the idols of the past and refuse to embrace all new light, refraining from the utterance of sincere conviction for fear of ostracism, or shall we, forsaking everything which reason and conscience alike inveigh against, sail boldly upon a new sea till we explore a new continent? Acting religiously, as Columbus did physically, when he forsook every comfort in his old home, going in search of a newer and brighter, though hitherto undiscovered land, we may go forth upon the waters of an ocean of research, assured of the existence of a fairer continent than the one we leave behind, haunted by the demons of superstition and dread.

As we read the words of Jesus concerning new wine and old bottles, we cannot fail to see how earnestly he recommends all men not to put new wine into old bottles; for if new wine be put into old bottles, the bottles will burst and the wine be spilled. He tells us never to patch an old garment with a new piece of cloth, or we shall destroy the garment we seek to improve by putting the new material in with the old. If only all so-called liberal Christians would perceive how necessary it is to leave the old churches and establish independent societies, and to rid themselves of the incubus of antiquated creeds and methods, which are never anything but a hindrance to progression, and a shameful mockery when allowed to remain after the minds of the congregation have rejected them; if they would only arrange a new set of formulas, adapted to a new era of thought, instead of patching the old garment and constantly rending it in the futile effort to mend it, they would be doing a true work, similar to that of Jesus and his early followers; they would be making ready new bottles for new wine, and constructing a new garment adapted to the new body it is needed to cover. Now we have no word of condemnation for the existing churches, because they have value for those who need them and believe sincerely what they teach. If you believe in Calvinism, in the name of all honesty attend regularly a Calvinist meeting-house; if you endorse Roman Catholic claims, and imagine that your soul's salvation is imperiled by stepping outside the precincts of the church, then remain in the Romish Church till you feel differently; obey its every command; do just as the priest advises you. If sincere in your convictions, if a sense of duty impels you to favor ancient institutions, then these institutions may be necessary for you; they belong to an earlier stage of the world's growth than the present one, and if the development of your mind is allied to that stage, if you fail to grasp a later and broader revelation, these institutions may be as much needed by you as are leading-strings by an infant; but when a soul has beheld a brighter light, when a mind has

found a more satisfactory place of repose, when it can no longer accept an ancient creed, then it becomes a duty to join an organization more in sympathy with its honest views, or, failing to find such an association, to remain outside of all. Rather endeavor to attract to a brighter light minds yet in darkness, than seek to hide a new revelation under the bushel of effete institutions.

Only a very short time ago spiritualistic journals teemed with accounts of the attitude of the English Church Congress toward Spiritualism. Editors and writers in these organs in England, and also here, seemed delighted beyond measure because Episcopalians had discussed Spiritualism, and thereby rendered it respectable, as they did not unsparringly condemn it. The interesting and able papers read at this Congress show signs of vitality, and sure disintegration inside the church. We indeed rejoice to see how the spirit of intolerance is dying out in the English church, but because Episcopalians are willing to allow that there may possibly be something true in Spiritualism, we do not feel that Spiritualists are any more entitled to respect than though every church unsparringly condemned them. They may rejoice in the victory of truth, and be enabled to press on with greater zeal as they see their efforts crowned with new success, but for them to act as though they were pleased with church patronage, and proud of having been patted on the back by ecclesiastical dignitaries is for them to behave most inconsistently and unworthily. If they know that they hold possession of a truth the church is compelled eventually to recognize, church patronage is no honor, as the church is inferior to that to which it is at length obliged reluctantly to yield; rather will the time come when the dying churches will need a word of encouragement from more enlightened outsiders to save them from inevitable destruction.

Any one whose aim and object is to please a bishop is no liberal, and ought at once to enter the theological fold. We may rest assured that so long as the church remains with its present creeds and services, it will regard no one as other than a heretic and schismatic who does not submit to its rule, even though it may be forced to admit that intercourse between the two worlds is a possibility. The church has a definite system of faith, not composed of elastic but firm material. You may try to stretch it, but in vain; it may break, but it cannot extend. The declarations of orthodoxy are positive. The church's arguments are perfectly logical, granting its premises. If you cannot attack the premises then you cannot overturn its logical arguments and deductions. Nothing is more logical than Roman Catholic arguments based on the assumption of papal infallibility. Admit that Christ is our divine master, and that

he gave the keys to Peter, with power to transmit them to his successors, and reason compels us to allow that the popes cannot err in matters of doctrine. It is not the superstructure, but the foundation, which we attack, and if we can but prove the insecurity of the foundation, as a matter of course the whole edifice is unreliable. Calvinists are in just as unassailable a position. Granting then their premises, but being unable to assume what they assume before they begin to argue, in our estimation their house is built on sand, and to its sandy foundation, not to its architectural plans, do we ever point those whose ear we can gain.

A radical, not a superficial change, is the desideratum to-day. The attempt to stretch words to give them new meanings is unwarrantable. If our faith is new, then new hymns, new prayers and new rubrics must displace the old, or we shall be everlastingly floundering in a sea of hopeless, unprofitable, and most obscurely ambiguous controversy. Until we use plain words, understood by the public but in one sense, chaos, not harmony, will prevail in organizations. In our recent discourses on organization, we defined a true organization as a structure reared on an affirmative foundation. Negative speculation as a base will never be more than sliding sand. Before we organize a new church successfully, we must find a new basis for faith, for morality, and offer some new system of ethics to the public for their acceptance; as no mind will willingly barter even a disagreeable certainty for a hopeless blank, suspense being always less endurable than even an assurance of evil. The ethical system of the future must offer to the intellect a reason for all that it advocates, and at the same time steer clear of the stultification of the affectional nature, which is fully as important to man as is the intellectual.

Science and religion are destined to unite spontaneously in this new system, and upon the new basis faith, separated from superstition, will stand and gleam as it never could when it did not stand upon the rock of unassailable fact. Now what is the new basis of faith? If you are at all acquainted with Unitarian and Universalist history you will know that all the early preachers of these liberal faiths strove to prove that they could find biblical sanctions for all they advocated. They undertook to prove their every statement by reference to the Scriptures. Volumes have been written to decide as to the correct rendering into English of a single Greek word. Does it mean eternal or simply long enduring, is ever the burden of the controversy, and so long as men undertake to decide what the everlasting condition of human souls may be by reference to the Bible, we shall not arrive at anything like a satisfactory conclusion, as the Bible differs in one part

from another so widely that materialism, as well as every shade of Christian doctrine, seems inculcated in certain parts of the strange old volume. We must have a new court of appeal wherein we may decide the vexed questions. The Bible can never answer except in a miserably uncertain manner. The Bible registers the evolution of thought; it marks the changes in human opinion, and thus at one time and in one place it plainly teaches something it diametrically opposes elsewhere. According to the old methods of reference, if we cannot find the doctrine of the Trinity supported by scriptural proofs we must become Unitarians, and, on the other hand, if the weight of biblical testimony is in favor of the Trinity, Unitarians are in the wrong. This method is well enough, granting the premise of biblical infallibility, but, denying this, then the whole argument falls worthless to the ground, as it is not improbable that some things almost wholly untrue are taught in the Bible. Take, for instance, the doctrine of immortality: no answer is vouchsafed to that great question in Job as to the destiny of the soul—"If a man die, shall he live again?" How easy to put the query, but how difficult to find an answer to it in the Bible. This difficulty is obvious; the very existence of a multitude of jarring sects proves it to be so. The Second Adventists to-day positively declare that only the righteous live hereafter, and sustain their statements entirely by an appeal to the Bible. Just as persistently does the Orthodox believer in the everlasting punishment of the wicked fly to the same book to prove the correctness of his faith, and with equal zeal does the Universalist from the same pages announce the future and eternal happiness of every human being.

No one claims infallibility for Shakspeare; no one feels obliged to believe anything because he says it is so; but if we can go to the works of the great poet and find anything therein appealing to our better judgment, capable of elevating our entire nature, we will read his words daily. If by reading his sayings ere we retire to rest, we can wake up next morning nobler and truer, because imbued with his sentiments, it becomes our duty to read him every night; not because he is infallible, but simply because he has for us that without which our souls cannot so fully control the senses. Precisely for the same reason should we search the Scriptures, if by so doing our lives are ennobled. It becomes our duty to follow any possible course of action immediately we discover that that course is beneficial to us, and by conferring benefit on us individually, improves the race through our instrumentality. For all we know, it may be positively immoral for some people to read the Bible. It may have such an effect upon them that, by the perusal of its pages, they

are rendered unfit to discharge the duties of life devolving upon them; not because the Bible is not a good book, but only by reason of its inability to feed their souls and minister to their highest requirements.

As all men cannot thrive upon the same material food, or in the same latitude, even so various spiritual meats and climates are needed to satisfy the legitimate cravings of varying moral and intellectual organisms. To give you a homely, but, we trust, forcible illustration, let us speak for a moment of physical food as served to the public in two different restaurants. Whenever you take your meals in one, you leave it cheerful, healthy, and ready to perform your duties with alacrity and ease; but whenever you eat in the other, you are rendered morose, dyspeptic, and altogether unfit for your work. Now it is a positive act of immorality for you knowingly to partake of food whose effect upon you is injurious. You cannot injure yourself without also inflicting injury upon others, and the claims of society upon you are such that it has a right to demand of you obedience to the laws of nature which, if broken by you as they relate to your own person, render an infliction upon the race which it ought not to have imposed upon it by you. To place morals on this basis is to acknowledge that by viewing and understanding the effects of our actions upon society, we can determine as to what is right and what is wrong without waiting to open any book or hear the voice of any prelate. To insure the greatest good of the largest possible number of our fellow-beings should be the uninterrupted effort of the moralist. Whatever does more good than harm is at least relatively moral; whatever inflicts more harm than good proves itself at least relatively immoral. Thus the question of eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing, walking, talking, working, playing, may be a moral question, a religious one, as to do good to others is ever to fulfill the only command given by all the truly conscientious in all ages. This new basis is found in man himself, not in a purported revelation from above; and as men are living now on a higher plane of life than that on which they stood over eighteen hundred years ago; as the laws of nature are the same in every age while books decay, God is ever issuing a new supply of Bibles, his living word being manifest through the human creatures whose inner light is his own spirit.

The gospels at best contain fragments only of what Jesus taught. The statements there made were made long after his transition to the unseen world, by his disciples, who had memorized a portion of his utterances and had not forgotten some of the leading incidents in his life. Even these fragments are adulterated in many instances, not only by willful perversion at

times on the part of copyists and translators, but also in their original form by defective memory and absence of spotless purity in the original writers. To deny that the teachings attributed to Jesus mark an era in human attainment immeasurably in advance of the Mosaic, is to deny a self-evident truth. Moses was aptly termed by Paul a schoolmaster to bring men to the Christ. Every spirit passes through that stage in which he represents the children of Israel, needing simply negative commands ere he reaches a height sufficiently elevated to allow of his following the positive commands of the law of love. There are two great laws in the world to-day: the law of Moses and the law of Christ. One is the law of fear, the other of love. One appeals to the brutish in man, the other to the angelic. One appeals to his love of justice and of humanity, the other to his fear of punishment. One leads man to obey because he fears the results of disobedience, the other impels him to do the right for love of humanity. The higher law knows naught of fear, as perfect love casteth out fear. Before we can reach to the law of Christ, we must obey the law of Moses.

By Christ we do not mean necessarily a man, but a principle of benevolence, while Moses signifies retaliation, justice untempered by mercy. As we cast our eyes over the decalogue we do not find one word in all the Ten Commandments which can be objected to on moral grounds, though we assert that the form in which ideas are there cast is a form peculiarly adapted to ancient times and habits, and at this day it is not necessary to place these commands in our churches and schoolhouses as a rule of life. Our condition is not that of those Jews to whom these laws were given. We do not need to impose the same restraints upon educated and civilized people that were imposed very rightfully upon those far more barbaric. It is in this matter just as it is in all the ordinary transactions of life: we put a guard round the fire when a little child is playing in the room, but take it off when he is older. While it is dangerous for the infant to approach the fire, the charge of it may be intrusted to him when older. If a child disobeys parental injunctions and burns his fingers the result of disobedience is of course beneficial, as it gives him a lesson in obedience he could learn in no other way. The severe penalties of olden times were frequently the best means the ancients could devise for the protection of society as a whole, but to-day the laws have naturally become obsolete. Life's discipline absolutely requires experiments which are often very painful; but rather than never stand firm on your own feet would you not gladly welcome any number of distressing falls? It does every one good to be tempted. The sufferings incident

to failure develop resisting power for the future. The old churches are many of them like conservatories filled with hot-house plants, very beautiful, exhaling delightful fragrance, but utterly unable to brave the storm or live without artificial heat. They are like rare exotics that have no strength to encounter the elemental strife outside the conservatory.

Dr. Isaac Watts, in one of his hymns descriptive of the elect church of God, exclaims:

"We are a garden, walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclosed by grace
Out of the world's wild wilderness."

Similar statements to these abound in evangelical hymnology, and are most truly expressive of the real belief of Calvinists generally. These saints are supposed to be entirely free from the temptations common to ordinary men, for, while they are exposed to all the ordinary dangers of life in the world at large, they are prevented from falling by the special grace of God conferred upon them and not granted to others. Thus their righteousness is imputed and not native, and their morality negative rather than positive in its character, as it is merely farcical to speak of exposure to sin, and then in the same breath declare that believers in Christ are not allowed to fall, by reason of the special grace of God preventing them. Arminians (all Evangelicals not Calvinists) have protested, it is true, against this peculiar tenet of Calvinism to some extent, as the Wesleys and others have vigorously denounced the doctrine of the impossibility of the fall of the saints; but even among Arminians so implicit is the reliance placed upon the finished, atoning work of Jesus in behalf of all his people, that for a minister to dare to put a premium upon a virtuous life is for him to lose his position as a minister of even a Methodist Church. To take away Christ from men as a vicarious saviour is, of course, to destroy the conservatories in which religious hot-house plants can be forced by strong excitement and ardent faith in a personal redeemer, into unnatural bloom. But men and women, to glorify manhood and womanhood and earn a title to true glory and happiness, both here and hereafter, must develop a sturdy and positive religion or morality capable of withstanding every tide of opposition and evil.

While we have had in the past many a race of moralists who may be compared to clinging vines, needing to twine around some giant oak for protection, the moralists of the future will be like unto the oaks that withstand the elements themselves, and afford protection to the weak who need a protector. As long as any soul on earth is too weak to stand alone the idea of saviours may yet remain, only instead of one saviour we shall have many; and those who are the saviours will be men of the

type of those great teachers of the past who, as exemplars and inspirers, are inexpressibly valuable to humanity when properly understood, but directly injurious so soon as their work is regarded as substitutionary, while it is in reality only exemplary. To take the place of old theology a new system of ethics will assuredly arise, and, as Felix Adler has suggested, teachers of ethics will in many instances be the successors of the clergy of the past and present. In this new system we shall have nothing presented to us in conflict with the truths to be found in antecedent systems; the new ethical system will be simply a result of evolution in its effect on moral progress. The new ethics will be produced by evolutionary law as naturally as the butterfly emerges from the chrysalis, or as the bird leaves the egg when ready to stretch its wings. As the ultimate condition of the grub is that of the butterfly, as the ultimate attainment of the acorn is realized only when it becomes an oak, even so the ultimate of ethics can be nothing less than their flowering out into a system at once rational and spiritual, satisfying to man as an affectional and intellectual being.

The view we take of ancient beliefs and ceremonies is the following: they were seeds, acorns or eggs, germs of future developments. Without them humanity could not have risen to its present altitude. The good in them forbids them to remain permanently as embobiments of truth, as all good is daily unfolding, and all life resists in time the prison in which its incipient stages are passed. When fruition's hour arrives, do we strive to imprison the liberated bird in the egg out of which it has emerged? Do you strive to capture butterflies and doom them to inhabit chrysales, because without an egg a bird never is produced, neither a butterfly without a chrysalis? By endeavoring to put the new religion into the old churches and forms of worship, we are guilty of folly as great as the folly of those who would expect a bird capable of flying to reënter and live within the egg out of which it sprang. I offer no disrespect to the egg when I discard it; I merely recognize that its work is done, and that, while formerly a blessing, it would now be an incubus. Conservatives have a perfect right to enjoy their own embryonic life as long as they are unready for greater freedom; but nothing can be more ludicrous and pitiable than the spectacle of cringing liberals striving to come as near as possible to the level of the old faiths and practices, as though the taking of advance steps was something to be ashamed of. By such a course you give every opponent the right to believe that you feel your own position inferior to his, or else that his permission must be asked ere you have a right to differ from him on ceremonial matters.

We are willing to credit Bibles, churches and olden teachers with having done a great deal of necessary work in the world; but we certainly are not willing to allow that they have a better right to exist than we, any more than we allow that adults should crave the permission of children ere they use their larger powers. Without past inspiration we should no more have been ready for the new light which now breaks in upon us, than without children we should have had men; or, again, without fathers and mothers, a new generation. The standard of excellence in the mind of the conservative, be he Jew or Gentile, is the opinion and practice of the forefathers; whereas the standard of excellence acknowledged by progressive minds is ideal and future, and that only upon a glimpse of a something so transcendently beautiful the soul can now gaze. The backward gaze of the conservative leads him to desire to become what men once were; the eager longing of the progressionist is to become what men have never had the opportunity of becoming until now.

Without the fierce struggles of ancient reformers we should never have obtained the liberty we now enjoy; without the seemingly ridiculous controversies of the past, we should never have been ready to see the beauties in a broader faith; as intellectual and spiritual light is generated by the collision of minds, just as the friction produced by the contact of atoms or bodies is always needful to produce light and heat. The future, to all great minds, has appeared larger than the past; the measure of individual attainment could not represent to so great a worker as Jesus the measure of human possibility, and hence he plainly declares to those who are to succeed him, Greater works than I have done shall ye do; my work would not be great unless it paved the way for something yet greater.

If Christians really followed the injunctions of their Saviour, and placed moral growth and spiritual development above all else, however wonderful in their eyes the cures wrought by Jesus and his primitive followers upon the bodies of men might be, they would quickly admit that those radicals who deny the miracles in the letter but accept them in the spirit, have given Jesus credit for doing greater works than the Evangelists literally make mention of. For is not the work of societary regeneration greater than the work of the physician or animal magnetizer, who merely relieves pain and removes bodily disorder, but has no power to correct vice or release men from the tyranny of evil habits? Liberal religionists, as a rule, lift the thought of healing beyond the body to the mind and spirit. They see under the guise of legend a mighty moral force at work, liberating minds from bondage, and saving souls from the

enslaving power of the passions. If Jesus did literally cause cripples to take up their beds and walk erect, blind men to see, deaf people to hear, and the seemingly dead to rise from their graves, did he not accomplish a far greater amount of real good, even while performing no physical cures, if by precept, example and moral suasion he lifted lives out of the prison in which they were victims of far worse disorders than any which can possibly afflict the body?

There is to us nothing either impossible or improbable in the letter of the miracles even; they all are capable of a rational and natural explanation; they are included within the realm of science; we can understand them, and thus see no difficulty whatever in believing that they took place; but the largest interpretation of those miracles is that which raises them to the dignity of cures primarily affecting the spirit, and, as a result of spiritual harmony and liberty, the body. All moral needs are more important than physical ones. Could we reform all morals, bodies would soon be healthy and homes happy, as immorality, in one or other of its numerous forms, is the source whence almost all bodily ailments flow. By immorality we mean disobedience to the highest law which human beings can perceive and obey. The greater can always include the less, while the less may often exist without the greater. If any of you have the power to transform men morally, you must assuredly have sufficient curative ability to heal physical infirmities, as the divine law of cure ordains that every man's own spirit shall cure his own body, and that to release the soul from bondage is to give your patient power to rid himself of external annoyances. Is it not a greater work to reform a woman's character than to heal her body of a twelve years' infirmity? When Jesus converted an adulteress, by his sympathy and soul-power, he did a far mightier work than when he healed the Syro-Phœnician.

The new interpretation of many texts being a larger one, does not destroy their olden value; it merely adds to it by pointing you to greater works than the letter alone recognizes. The work of the modern reformer is not so much a work relating to the body as to the soul; as it is erroneous to suppose that physical well-being or intellectual culture alone is a panacea for every ill. We certainly do not undervalue the work of him who heals the body only. To remove a single pain is to do a blessed work; but if we build upon a rocky and not on a sandy foundation, we shall attach more importance to spiritual culture than to aught beside. To prescribe simple remedies for the cure of fleshly ills is to do a great and needed work; but the coming physician can afford to dispense with external remedies, as the soul-power he utilizes will control and include all beneath it. When

we reach ailments by a moral force we liberate the fettered spirit of the sufferer, and give nature freedom to do her own work; thus every spirit cures its own body. The faith mentioned so frequently in the New Testament is nothing else than soul force. If even so great a healer as Jesus failed to arouse this, he could do no mighty work. He appears at times to have marvelled because of his inability to awaken this spiritual power in every one, and clearly perceived that when he failed to arouse it he could perform no miracle.

The greatest work of the reformer is the work of him who provides a better substitute for the comparatively worthless thing he takes away. The organ of veneration is one of the natural parts of the human brain; to destroy it, or even to hamper it, would be to fight against the completeness of human development. If we cannot put the truths revealed to us to-day into the old bottles of ecclesiasticism, we nevertheless cannot do without any bottles at all. The religious teacher of to-day must, therefore, form or discover new bottles which may hold the new wine. Jesus does not ever content himself with iconoclasm; we can scarcely imagine a greater iconoclast than he, but his iconoclastic works were ever preparatory to the grander work of re-construction. And thus he does not content himself with giving negative commands to his followers, but, while insisting upon the necessity of abstaining from putting new wine into old bottles, he displays the positive need that exists for the provision of new bottles to accommodate the new wine. Sciolism is all negation; science is all affirmation. The sciolist is always telling you about something of which he is ignorant; the scientist is ever revealing positive truths, the sheer force of which is more than sufficient to demolish opposing error. The great superiority of Spiritual Positivism over the faiths of the existing churches, and also over a stupid, negative sciolism, is the superiority of knowledge over ignorance, of demonstrable fact over unquestioning credulity. You may be forever questioning until everything appears uncertain to you, without ever arriving at any positive conclusion with regard to anything. A condition of chronic doubt is perhaps the most disastrous of all states of mind, because the recognition of nothing can form no basis for anything.

All great teachers proceed beyond negations to affirmations, and when removing a false basis they always point humanity to a wider and truer one. When the old ceremonial bottles are broken, when men can no longer find scope for the exercise of their inborn religious faculties within the pale of the old church, a newer and wider organization, a new bottle, capable of yielding without breaking to the vigorous movements of the young giant of modern thought, must be in readiness to receive this new wine. Jewish bottles, as you know, were skins, which swelled out as the wine within them was fermenting. New bottles could readily expand, old bottles could not, and thus the pressure of new wine broke them, while old wine, having passed its fermentation period, could rest quietly within them. One of the greatest dangers of to-day comes from the attempt of many to put new wine, figuratively speaking, into old bottles. In Chicago, such

men as Prof. Swing and Dr. Thomas have long endeavored to put new wine into old bottles; but those whose interest it was to protect the old churchianic skins cast them out and their new wine with them. Thus do the Presbyterian, Methodist, and other churches, prove daily more and more conclusively how utterly unable they are to withstand the pressure of new thought. Mr. Miln, another minister in the same city, has quite recently left the church because even the Unitarian bottle was not new enough for his wine. These three men, representative preachers, show by their exodus from the church how impossible it is for new thought to run in an old groove; how futile the attempt to ask the church to patronize the liberal thought new churches, new systems, new ideas demand.

We must all remember that every church has two creeds, one positive, the other negative. As the positive creed tells you exactly what you must believe, the negative informs you also what you must not believe. Thus a creed in its entirety is like two walls hedging one in, the one resisting all discovery of new truth, the other forbidding any relaxation from the old iron faith. The creeds of the future will have no negative limitations; they will never attempt to assign a limit to existence, while at the same time their affirmations are overwhelmingly positive. They will be so thoroughly substantiated by fact and analogy, that no one will ever feel called upon to make them, unless his reason assures him that the propositions to which he assents are self-evident. New bottles must, of course, have definite form; they must be made of something, but while very strong and actual, they will be so plastic that the new wine fermenting within them will find no resistance offered by them to its motions. New creeds will not be old oaks just ready to decay, but vigorous young saplings, and often acorns just sprouting out in the incipient stages of their path toward maturity.

Now if we admit, as we all *must* admit who have any positive convictions in our minds, that there is an Infinite Power working in all things for the best; if we can believe in divinity at all; that man is a creature of endless progressive possibilities; that all things ever obey the laws of cause and effect, we must allow that all future lives are to be but further developments from present and past lives. If we believe man capable of everlasting progression, then all the knowledge we have gained in the past will of necessity be the preparation simply for a vaster prospective knowledge, giving us power ultimately to solve the abstrusest problems. These problems, however, will not take from us our rules for solving simpler and already solved problems, any more than a knowledge of mathematics can wrest from any one his confidence in the integrity of the multiplication table. Certain world-wide affirmations in spiritual science can never be denied through an eternity of progress, any more than any amount of knowledge can teach you that eleven and eleven make twenty-three or twenty-one; you know forever they make twenty-two, and nothing else. Future astronomical theories may reveal much concerning Jupiter and its inhabitants, but can never deny successfully the existence of that planet. If we give you a theory of Jupiter, it is possi-

ble that future revelations may compel us to modify our theory without denying anything once proved.

The church creeds are like theories of other worlds; guesses about their condition and population. The Church asks you to believe it and not the telescope; and thus, ages ago, it persecuted astronomers as heretics. To-day it aims its blow at an intellectual or spiritual telescope, and tells you that every modern view of the spirit-world is false, if inharmonious with antique speculation. We can no more expect the American nation to accept sectarian Christianity as a national religion, than to ask it to follow the lead of the governments of Europe, and submit to monarchical sway. Read Confucius on the true relation between king and subject, and his thought lives forever as the soul of the highest government; but while accepting totally the inner thought of the great Chinese philosopher, we do not feel it desirable to import hither the Chinese administration. As the American people have dismissed old governments, so they must also shortly as thoroughly dismiss old theologies. A war of blood comes first, as man's physical nature is outermost and is first attended to in this subliminary sphere. Washington's sword, Paine's pen, more lately the heroic efforts of abolitionists to destroy negro slavery, have now ceased, only to make room for a bloodless conflict of thought, which will most assuredly result in the emancipation of the nation from ecclesiastical thralldom in many parts of the country, even at this hour, as galling and humiliating to freeborn men and women as was the old-time allegiance to the English crown.

In the future we shall completely abandon all assumptive dogma, and be fully as republican or democratic in religious as we are in civil affairs. The coming religion of America must be as indigenous as its government; it must be concrete, eclectic, uniting the best and permanent elements in all systems. The Buddhist, the Jew, the Mohammedan, as well as the Christian, must contribute his special element to the new theology. And this new theology will be correctly a theosophy, not merely a treatise on divine things; but a knowledge of them, *soph*, wisdom, positive information will displace *logos*, the word—the word concerning Theos, divinity, which is too frequently but an empty utterance. The expositors of the new religion, the new ethics, need a new phraseology adapted to new sentiments; new forms adapted to new beliefs; new statements embodying our new convictions, and, therefore, the work of the successor of the present clergyman will be the work of one who is competent to search for evidence and build up on the rock of demonstrated fact an entirely new religious edifice, composed of living stones, vital truths, feeding equally the reason and the soul of man.

In this brief dissertation on the future of religion in this land we have studiously avoided all harsh reference to conservatives, and trust no one will accuse us of illiberality because we tell them that their opinions are at best but relatively true. In the search for truth let us all unite, and remember that the Christian saviour said that to know the truth we must live a life of truth and love. In this living out the will of God may we all find the pearl of priceless worth, even God's unsullied Truth.

Berkeley Hall Lectures---No. 23.

THE COMING GOVERNMENT.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

Those who heard or have read our discourse on "The Coming Physicians and Healing Institutes" will be prepared for all we have to say to-day concerning "The Coming Government," as the same ideas enunciated in that lecture must of necessity be put forward to-day, though in somewhat different form, to enable us to realize the grand central thought upon which we desire to fix your mental gaze—viz: the recognition of adaptability and merit as the sole qualifications for office.

As the physician, to be a physician truly, must be a born healer; as the minister of religion, to be in truth a good shepherd to the flock entrusted to his charge, must be an inspired teacher, born to reveal spiritual truths to others and able by nature to awaken the finest susceptibilities of the human heart; as the musician, the poet, the painter, the sculptor, the mechanic must be endowed, at or before birth, with those peculiar talents which can alone make him great in any one of these walks in life, even so must the ruler be a man or woman born to rule; the governor must be a governor from birth if he is ever to discharge official duties wisely and well. In a land where republican or democratic ideas are popular and regnant, there ought to be no difficulty in placing the right men in important public positions, especially so since America declares that all her sons are born free and equal; but who that reads the newspapers of this land is not fully convinced that the very worst men are often exalted, while the very noblest are rejected with scorn. Who can fail to realize that, in spite of boasted freedom, millions of nominally free American persons pay as slavish obedience to the golden calf of to-day as ever did the idol-

atrous Israelites of past ages pay adoration to the symbol of wealth and worldly prosperity, ignoring the wise teachings of their law-givers and the sage injunctions of their seers and prophets who commanded them to bow only before the shrine of the ever-living Spirit.

However great may be the evils of monarchy—and we are not among those who underrate the evils attending monarchical rule—as great if not even greater evils are possible where a Republican form of Government exists; for while in Europe royalty and aristocracy are recognized, landed gentry considered above the industrial classes, as a rule persons belonging to ancient and wealthy families have enjoyed some considerable educational advantages; whereas in this country, though birth and breeding are thought less of than abroad, a most pernicious influence is exerted throughout the length and breadth of the land by an acknowledgment of the aristocracy of wealth. And we must all be fully aware how frequently wealth comes into the possession of persons who have no claim upon it other than the claim put forward by the gambler, the dissembler, the wily rogue, who, with scarcely any culture, knows how to get the best of a fellow-man by resorting to the vilest modes of trickery and falsehood. While at all times delighted to eulogize American institutions, when we can do so conscientiously, frankness, simple honesty, compels us to point out at times the hollow rottenness of national affairs. A cry goes up everywhere for civil service reform. A cry ascends daily to the powers unseen for deliverance from bribery, corruption and wickedness of every kind entrenched in high places. What is the disease? Where and what is the remedy?

Your infinite freedom is either your salvation or your destruction; your liberty is either your best blessing or your worst curse; it is like the truth, a two-edged sword—either cutting down all the adversaries of your peace and prosperity, or else demolishing you because of your inability to support your position as a healthy and vigorous tree, an ornament, not an encumbrance, to the ground.

In America reasonable objection can scarcely be made to the Constitution or to the Declaration of Independence. The immortal words of Washington, of Jefferson, of Paine, of others of your earliest victors in the fight for liberty, convey to the end of time the gospel of peace on earth and good-will to men, if they are only rendered practical and lived in accordance with. The radical difference between the law of America and the law of one of the old European nations consists in this: that here, in order to be tyrannical and partial, you have to break the law; while there, to be just to all, showing no favoritism to any, you have to break the law. Here the law ordains justice, but fails to enforce it; there the law winks at oppression and sanctions the invasion of the rights and liberties of a multitude by an individual. Across the ocean the Constitution itself needs to be attacked, and is even now being fiercely fought against by hosts of political agitators, so that bloodshed is by no means improbable in Europe. So long as America belonged to England, and so long as slavery was permitted, bloody wars were the rule rather than the exception; but now, America has already been baptized with blood; she has already shaken off her allegiance to a foreign power, already erased from her escutcheon the terrible blot of slavery; so that, unless in behalf of the Indians warfare should be undertaken, warfare is out of the question.

It will not surprise us if within the course of a very few years Europe is the scene of a terrific international conflict, resulting in the establishment of a continental republic, in which such countries as France, Austria, Germany and others shall correspond to the various States of the American Union. Europe is smaller than the United States, though it has a much larger population; several American States are larger than powerful European countries. Thus there seems to be no great difficulty in conceiving of the union of the several great powers into one, the representative of the whole being chosen by the united republics. No one even superficially acquainted with the present state of Europe can deny that she is on the verge of a tremendous civil and ecclesiastical upheaval or disruption. Not one of her lands acknowledges a head, either temporal or spiritual, whose position is other than most unenviable. To be a king now-a-days is to be a figure-head, crowned mockingly, as Jesus was

crowned with thorns; to be arrayed sumptuously in royal apparel, to live in splendid state, to accept the fawning homage of a multitude of dependents and sycophants, to possess almost boundless wealth, to be endowed nominally with almost if not altogether absolute power; but to know all the while that you are never safe; that unseen assassins are lying in wait for you night and day; that however carefully you may guard the interests of your subjects, however strenuously you may exert yourself in their behalf, you are looked upon with hatred as well as with suspicion, and that thousands would rather receive your head severed from your body than any other gift which could possibly be bestowed upon them.

We have quite recently taken occasion to inveigh against Nihilistic atrocities as perpetrated in Russia. We can look upon Nihilistic action simply with unqualified disapprobation, but all the while we have the deepest sympathy with the injured creatures whose grievous wrongs led to the organization of systematic Nihilism. Two wrongs can of course never make a right, and thus Nihilistic atrocity cannot be excused, but it certainly can be reasonably accounted for. There are some who have imagined they beheld in the assassination of Garfield by Guiteau a parallel to the murder of the Russian Czar. While admitting the existence of an under-current of hostility in this country toward the powers that be, we can scarcely deem it possible that a President can be hated and put to death simply because he occupies the Presidential chair; while it is a fact capable of demonstration that there are millions of persons who regard a throne with such abhorrence that the occupant of it excites their crudest rage, solely because of his position. A President may be hated as an individual, but no one probably wishes that there be no President; they only desire one who meets their approval in his opinions and actions, while all over Europe there is a growing detestation of all crowns and thrones simply as such. If an angel or a god sat on one he would be hated for his position's sake, no matter how devoutly admired by reason of his personal virtues.

But now arises the question as to whether this implacable hatred of the kingly seat is rational and proper. Is it normal and healthy, or is it only a fleeting fever occasioned by centuries of oppression? To answer such a question, however imperfectly, it will be necessary for us to analyze rather closely and carefully the needs of the world, as very much may be said both for and against the need of a throned monarch. In order to answer one question intelligently we often have to ask another, and answer that before we can directly reply to the one immediately under our notice. In this instance we will ask the following: How did

thrones and kings ever come into existence in the first place? And having answered this briefly we may go on to a solution of the difficult problem we are attempting to solve this morning. History informs us that several thousands of years ago spots of earth became centres of civilization. From some cause or other individuals arose; singly and in small companies, who were endowed with special gifts of the spirit, also with peculiarly keen intellectual insight. These men were a necessity to the age which gave them birth; their exemption from the ordinary toils of life, their remarkably simple mode of living, their wonderful natural gifts of seership and prophecy, constituted them fit guides and rulers of the barbaric and untutored races over which they presided. Without them the populace would have been ungovernable and ungoverned, a prey to lawlessness and ignorance; they would soon have gone to destruction without these inspired and cultured teachers and rulers. In primitive times written books were not; but the starry scriptures of the skies, the flowery scriptures of the earth, and, above all, God's living word, incarnate in human life, were read and studied by these earliest illuminati and literati of the deserts. Through accident of birth, as materialistic philosophers might declare, these men (and women also) were endowed with peculiar facilities for the acceptance of spiritual guidance, and through them the gods, literally the spirits who had charge of the earth, communicated with men.

All primitive rulers were mediums as well as *seers*; all early governments theocracies; and as a theocracy is the Alpha of government, it will without doubt be also the Omega. A theocracy is only dangerous when it ceases to be such in reality. When, failing to voice the utterances of exalted invisible intelligences, it speaks only in support of priestly arrogance and worldly assumption, it becomes a machine controlled by unscrupulous egotists on earth, and their no less unscrupulous familiars in the unseen atmosphere, who palm themselves off as gods, and seek by dastardly threats and fearful imprecations to frighten men into unwilling obedience to their despotic sway. Hindostan is without doubt the cradle of Eastern civilization, though the Western continent is, in our opinion, the older of the two hemispheres. The earliest historic mediums are the Anchorites or Recluses of ancient India. These men of ascetic temperament, remarkably frugal habits, and extreme sensibility to outside influences, by reason of their profound spiritual knowledge and remarkable power of soul and will, became naturally without effort the rulers of the people among whom they dwelt. Superiority can always make itself felt; real merit needs no advertising; it is a power; and like mind, its force

needs not to be augmented by human ingenuity that men may be aware of its potency. All savage people are much like animals; they live like animals, seeking provision for their physical wants almost regardless of a higher life. Buried beneath their outward forms, these persons are not readily controlled by brute force, as, like the brutes, they are ferocious when attacked, and quickly and fiercely resent any invasion upon their liberties. To treat them firmly but with great kindness is the only way to succeed with them. Like the animals, their wills are inferior; the spirit-power within them is very slight. As psychologists they would all be subjects; not one operator would be found among them. Were they introduced into the company of civilized magicians, by reason of this spiritual and mental impotence, no matter how large and hardy they may be physically, they would be readily controlled by spare, ascetic men whose indomitable will-force and great spiritual development render them their masters.

Ignorant and savage races are always extremely superstitious, and can be easily induced to venerate a being endowed with mystical attributes. Hence higher intelligence, stronger will, larger spirituality—these were the forces manifested through the earliest governors of aboriginal and nomadic Asiatic tribes. The exercise of magical and intellectual power for good is, of course, always justifiable. It is, moreover, the duty of those possessing these gifts to employ them for the good of the race; these powers being given to us to use just as much as our eyes are given to us to see with, and our ears for purposes of hearing. Foolish indeed would be the individual who closed his eyes or sealed his ears because some of his neighbors were blind or deaf, or used their eyes and ears wrongly. Equally absurd are those who, with power to govern, do not allow their ruling instincts to have full legitimate play. The abuse of a power is of course the only danger attaching to it. Human nature, inherently selfish and dominant, is ever anxious to aggrandize self, even at the expense of others. The temptation to abuse power is one of the greatest trials to which the human spirit is subjected in its pilgrimage toward the celestial spheres. The abuse of power led to the domination of individuals over communities to an unjustifiable extent, and in an unwarrantable way. In Egypt, as in India, and more lately among the Jews, the governors and members of royal houses were also members of the priesthood. Moses was educated at the court of Pharaoh, and thus indoctrinated into the beliefs and customs of the Egyptians. From this source sprang the theocratic Jewish government, and many of the innumerable laws considered needful for the governance of

this "rebellious and stiff-necked people." In the earliest days of Jewish national life, the Hebrews acknowledged no civil potentate, but paid homage solely to the prophets and seers, who always acted really or presumably under divine guidance. Of course the divinities who directed them varied greatly in wisdom, power and justice; but the essential elements in theocracy are the elements of greatness in all government, and these elements are the recognition of the supremacy of spiritual over animal force, and the acknowledgment of man's dependence upon and indebtedness to the spiritual universe. The blind following of any and every spirit, because a spirit, is ever reprehensible, and disastrous in its effects upon the nation or person placing implicit faith in the directions given by a being simply because he is divested of the robe of flesh.

No doubt the highest attitude of thought toward the spiritual realm will be the veneration of Spirit rather than the blind worship of individual spirits. God, to us, is simply the fathomless ocean of Spirit, Good, Life ever beyond us; apprehensible but incomprehensible. The All-Good is the only fitting title of Deity, as it expresses our loftiest possible conception of Deity, satisfies all the intuitions and longings of our souls without in any measure limiting or arbitrarily locating the Infinite. The distinguishing and Godlike power of man consists in his ability to control other beings than himself, belonging either to the same or other races, by that subtle element of being, that veritable elixir of life which Bulwer Lytton, in his fascinating literary production, "The Coming Race," has styled Vril. This word, "Vril," he undoubtedly coins from virility, which signifies the estate of manhood as distinguishable from any state short of that in which man has the full powers belonging to human life—the powers of life and reproduction. The power of will, more interiorly of soul, is the one distinguishing power of man, forever separating human life from all other and lower lives. Animals, reptiles, insects may fascinate as well as torture their victims; but the hold they gain over their prey is due to a power resident in the physical organism, as they are always physically able to cope with the creatures they ensnare. Animal magnetism can and does exist below man; but purely animal magnetism is simply physical force, and depends for its quality and quantity upon the material condition of the man or animal generating and dispensing it, but the powers of will and soul which divide man by an impassable barrier from all below him, do not depend upon molecular arrangements, upon physical strength and conformation, but upon the development and activity of the invisible and imperishable part of his nature. Thus it is that the skillful general is always a born psychologist; every successful

commander mesmerizes his soldiers, and thus easily disciplines them. Place a man not liberally endowed with psychologic power over a regiment, and mutiny at once breaks out, as any six athletic fellows could have no difficulty in putting a general to death if he depended solely upon brute force wherewith to control them.

While Washington, Nelson, and other illustrious commanders, may never have studied into electro-biology as a science, while they may have been technically ignorant of the views put forward by Anton Mesmer and others, they possessed the natural mesmeric gift, and used it, not blindly or unconsciously, but knowingly and intelligently. They knew how great was the need for self-mastery ere they could bring others into subjection to their sway. Washington from his earliest infancy was carefully trained by a strict, though loving mother. No stricter disciplinarian appears in history than the mother of this great man. As a boy he learned to obey her and yet to love her; as a man he cherished her memory with the most affectionate tenderness, and drew from her noble example an inspiration to loftiest deeds of daring. But wherein consisted the power of this woman to enforce a loving obedience from a great mind? Her force was the force of superior mentality and large moral courage. No one can long continue to bow before an inferior, unless actuated by the vilest or unworthiest motives. Ignorant, cruel, and vicious potentates like Nero, have exacted and received cringing submission paid them by fawning flatterers, whose sycophancy was born solely out of the greed of gold or the thirst for prominence, or the slavish dread felt by little tyrants for a large one.

Fathers and mothers may rule by fear and not by love, if their children are only cowardly and base enough to pretend an allegiance they do not feel; but in the training of children every wise teacher or parent will discover that to enforce unwilling and blind obedience to the letter of a command is to foster cunning and falsehood in the subject. When children or adults obey solely from motives of fear, their belief is that nothing is to be dreaded except the discovery of their wrong by others. They do not learn to hate iniquity, to despise unholiness, they learn simply to invent contrivance, so that they may do wrong, but never be found out.

A conspiracy is usually the child of despotism. Nihilistic insurrections, organized secret plots laid against the lives of rulers, are the natural, inevitable outcome of harsh rule. In every family or school, just as in every nation, we must have rulers who are born for their arduous and responsible work; persons who have first subdued their own lower propensities, and hav-

ing gained an ascendancy over their own passions, have acquired the power to generate a force strong enough to annihilate opposition to their just decrees in others. A ruler must be first a man of temperate habits, strong, moral courage, large ability to resist sensuous temptations. Man's own body is the universe of matter in minimum; every element of matter finds its place in the human physical structure. As a drop is like the ocean in nature, though not in size or power, even so is a man like all humanity, and like all that is lower than man in the world of organic and inorganic being. If your own lower powers get the best of your higher judgment; if your senses overpower your moral intuitions, is it to be wondered at that what you fail to control in yourself you cannot control in another? Thus the man or woman who has no authority at home can never be a successful governor of a State or president of a nation. A woman who has no hold over her own children is entirely unfit for a public position needing a master-mind to control the foibles and eccentricities of a host of employees. The slave to sense will always be a victim to the sensuality of others; a tyrant is always a tool in the hands of the vicious, a despot always allows his country to be ruled for him by those who feed his vanity and minister to his personal gratification.

How has it been in England in the days of weak monarchs? How was it in the trial and execution of Mary Stuart, sanctioned by Elizabeth? The queen, vain and arrogant to excess, was utterly in the hands of those of her male flatterers who most persistently fed her unquenchable vanity. The execution of the Queen of Scots was neither more nor less than the bloody deed of a few nefarious nobles, using the Queen of England as a cat's paw for the accomplishment of their own ambitious ends. Persons in England allow themselves to vote for a man just because he is a Conservative, a Liberal, or a Radical, according to their own sectarian sympathies and party jealousies. In America votes are cast for men because they are Republicans, Democrats or Greenbackers. The exaltation of party spirit is the canker-worm which devours all the morality that otherwise might soften the asperities and lessen the evils of an aggressive government. Forget party in principle; remember that the knave will attract scoundrels to his side who will by him be elevated to seats of dignity, entirely regardless of his political opinion; remember that it is equally certain that no honorable man will sanction swindling, countenance lying, support the gross immoralities which to-day make it disgusting for refined and cultured ladies to breathe the political atmosphere of the capital; bear in mind, all of you who are voters, especially, that *principle* and not *party* is what

needs to be exalted and recognized; remember that errors of the head only are atoned for as soon as discovered, while errors of the heart, lack of conscientiousness, resistance of convictions of right, are hugged closer and closer to the bosom, no matter how bright the intellect may be, as intellectual attainment is not always coexistent with moral excellence.

A governor must be something more than well qualified, as far as brain development goes, for the office he holds. Secular education is not to be despised or underrated as a means of promoting the best interests of a people, but intellectual and aesthetic culture only constitute means to an end; the end itself is health, harmony, virtue. An intellectual apprehension of truth is not sufficient to glorify and make divine any human being; a living out of the truths accepted by the intellect is the one thing needful. In the absence of this practical living out of right sentiments, many of our literary authorities, our brilliant statesmen, are by no means what society has a right to expect them to be morally. If polygamy in Utah be a crying evil, can it be consistently and efficiently destroyed so long as polygamy is tolerated in Washington?—If intelligent American citizens, with their eyes wide open, vote knowingly for representatives of their party when they know that the men for whom they are voting are moral lepers, can they be surprised at the unwillingness of Liberals to sanction a crusade against Mormonism?

However strongly we may protest—and we do protest most emphatically—against polygamy, we cannot, as rational beings, advocate the exercise of legal pressure brought to bear upon men and women whose religious faith, in keeping with the doctrines of the Jewish Bible, sanctions and indeed advises a man to have several wives. Monogamic marriage is undoubtedly the highest type of marriage. It most nearly approximates to the angelic life of perfect and constant duality, male and female in the celestial spheres being united forever. Two make one in the angel-world; one is ever supplying to the other whatsoever the companion needs; and as perfect felicity, unbroken contentment, springs from a union of love and wisdom, however free love may be and is in heaven, love is so strong and constant in its voluntary adherence to its object that the very idea of divorce or of another union, entertained but for a moment, would be so detestable to the happy angels that it would transform their heavenly abodes into hells of discontent. In the higher spheres all striving and contention are unknown; love reigns supreme; none are compelled to do as they do other than by the all-constraining force of affection; laws are only the expressions of intelligent agreement; laws are always obeyed because they are all

lovable and beloved; fear is unknown, the dread of punishment is outgrown, and the emancipated spirit, emancipated from all the sordid motives actuating the dwellers upon earth, is at once the law-giver and the law-fulfiller.

Polygamy is a relic of barbarism; monogamy, in its present crude condition, is at least an endeavor after the angelic state. Passion, thirst for gold, love of place and power, these often enter into the marriage contract and outbalance the weight of the affections in the choice of a life-partner. Many unions are so persistently inharmonious that they should at once be broken to prevent further and greater evils; but rest assured with all your moralizing, with all your fine-spun theories of life as it should be, preaching and legislation only will never counteract and destroy existing vices. Laws are always enacted in vain if they are framed and enforced before the inhabitants of a district are sufficiently elevated to live under a wise rule.

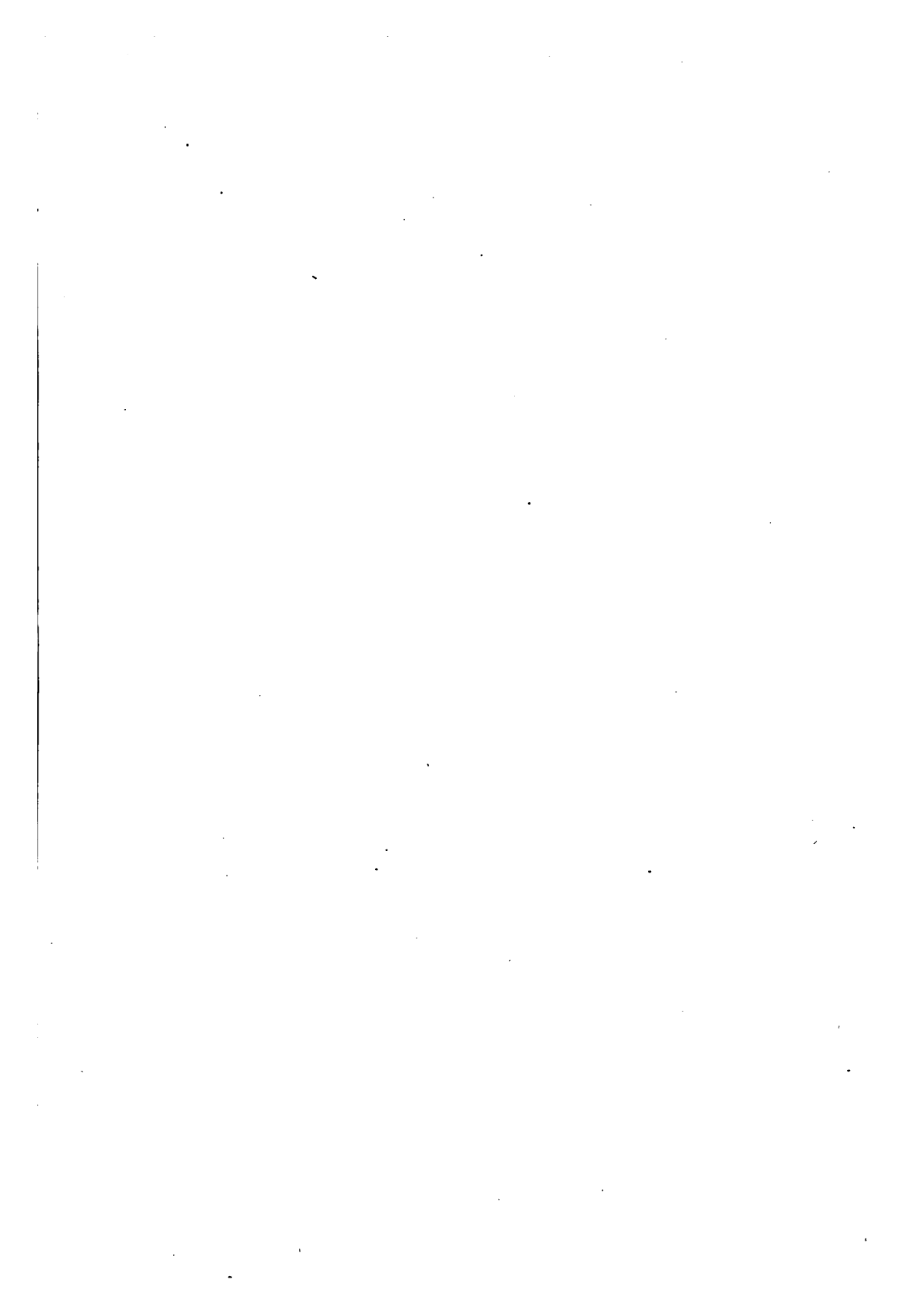
Prohibition may be theoretically correct—practically, it is a failure wherever tried; not, perhaps, a total failure, but at least a comparative failure. The sale of intoxicating liquors is forbidden in Maine. In some country towns in that State there is without doubt a great deal less intemperance than in Massachusetts; but visit Portland, Bangor, or any other large city, and you may jostle against staggering drunkards in the streets, and this more especially at election time. The law prohibiting the sale of alcohol as a beverage is a wise and sensible law; but, unfortunately for the cause of temperance and the good of humanity, the law is rendered ineffectual by the connivance of many of the most prominent and wealthy citizens against the Government. Until these men are satisfied that the law is a good one, until they are sufficiently alive to the interests of the community to abstain from liquor for humanity's sake, they will render the law null and void by their perpetual disregard of it. Men do not fear legislators as they did; laws are not the terror they once were; and even though fear and dread of imprisonment and fines, and possibly execution, should exist, as it did centuries ago, a law that is feared and not loved always develops a race of cowards

and traitors, conspirators and anarchists, who regard with unmodified detestation the law itself and all the men through whom its force is brought to bear upon them.

The law of love is the only rational and experimentally useful law. To overcome evil with good is to put out fire with water, it being just as ridiculous to seek to overcome evil with evil as to extinguish a fire by adding fuel to the flame. The coming force is the power of affection manifested through intelligence, and working through the reason, not the blind and foolish affection which refuses to punish when to punish is necessary to effect reformation. There can be but two just grounds for the administration of reproof, these are the protection of society, and the reformation of the offender. Except in the most extreme cases, where there is an absence of the power necessary to put into effect the higher law, the taking away of human life as a punitive and retaliative measure is most decidedly unjustifiable. By hanging a criminal you do not rid the spirit whom you force from its material tenement of the environment of disposition which leads it into sin; for the weakness of mind, the absence of power to withstand temptation, the thirst for what is not rightfully one's own, these traits and errors are evidences of an unprogressed state of heart, which no sudden removal from the earthly body can change. Criminals linger on earth so long as they have criminal propensities, so long as they can find organisms susceptible to the pernicious influence they exert. They can and do obsess mortals, but obsession is impossible unless there be a condition in the person obsessed corresponding to the depravity in the sphere of the obsessing spirit. Let us then be strong enough to bear our own burdens and shoulder our own responsibilities, instead of saddling upon the backs of invisible scapegoats our own misdemeanors and the causes of them.

In this brief dissertation on the secret of true power we have no more than striven to give a morsel of food for digestion in your own minds, at your leisure. In future addresses we shall strive to be more explicit and enter with greater fullness into methods as applied to practical life, always remembering that self-discipline is the only preparation fitting one for exalted station in the new era.

BERKELEY HALL, 4 BERKELEY STREET, CORNER OF TREMONT STREET.—W. J. COLVILLE conducts Public Spiritual Services every Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The public freely and cordially invited.



EASIER FOR A CAMEL TO GO THROUGH THE EYE OF A
NEEDLE THAN FOR A RICH MAN TO ENTER
THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.—*Matt. xix: 24.*

The words which we have selected for our text, our motto this morning, are words frequently quoted by those political economists and others who agree with the ancient Jewish Essenians that the possession of wealth is in itself a sin. No one can have ever read the Gospels, even cursorily, without having arrived at the inevitable conclusion that each one of the four evangelists possessed a marked individuality of his own, and that the impress of the author's mind is very clearly and indelibly stamped upon the book he wrote.

Biographies are always entertaining if they are in any measure a true life-history of some illustrious person. We use the word illustrious in its true, not in its false sense. We mean by illustrious, noble; lustrous in mind and soul, one who dispenses light, gives every one good ideas, and sets a noble example. The illustrious in the worldly sense are often simply the notorious, and we all know that notoriety can easily be bought either with money or crime. The biography of Jesus is very fragmentary and imperfect, as it has been handed down to the present time through the mediumship of the New Testament; and the idiosyncrasies of the various men who have written about him have so eclipsed and disfigured a great character at times, that we can only with extreme difficulty arrive at any satisfactory conclusion with regard to the historic Christ. This places the Christian church in a sorry plight; it gives a wide field to the opponent of "revealed religion"; it opens a large door to the skeptic who antagonizes Christianity, and makes it an

extremely hard matter for the Christian when he strives to convert Jews and Orientals to his faith. If we accept the Christian premise that Jesus is infallible, and the only divine teacher of men, then it is highly necessary that we should know exactly what Jesus said and did, in order that we may say and do likewise; but if, in accordance with the teachings of a purely natural Theism, we refuse to exalt one man infinitely above all others, it matters very little to us whether Jesus, or any one else, spoke words attributed to him, or performed actions fathered upon him by his biographers.

Last Sunday in our discourse on "New Wine in New Bottles," we took occasion to remark that when speaking from a biblical text we do not necessarily endorse the sentiment it expresses; we merely use it as a convenient and appropriate introduction to certain thoughts we wish to convey, thoughts bearing upon the subject with which the text deals. From time to time, at the earnest request of many of our warmest friends, we have spoken from passages of Scripture, the ambiguity and obscurity of which lay them open to the severest criticism. Blind and angry criticism is ever a weak and foolish weapon to use against anything or any person, but a calm, dispassionate analysis of the intrinsic properties of any statement cannot but lead in time to the evolution of more perfect knowledge, and a wiser judgment in all things. We open the Bible to-day, not to accept or condemn, but simply to discuss the passage we have selected for our mutual consideration. The words are very startling, even though very old and familiar. In your childish days, whenever you read or heard them, you never conjured up before your mental vision

the impossible phenomenon of a camel crowding its huge body through the eye of a needle, as the mind refuses to present a picture of the absolutely impossible. You no doubt often imagined a huge animal going up to a needle and trying to squeeze through it; but the camel never went through the needle; and as the impossibility of the camel's passing through the needle's eye was an illustration of how impossible it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, you, if poor, felt some hope enter your minds that you might, perhaps, finally be saved, and the more so as the Sermon on the Mount promises heaven to the poor in spirit, and Luke makes Jesus say, "Blessed be ye poor," refusing to explain whether poverty of spirit or destitution of earthly riches is the necessary prerequisite for obtaining an entrance into the celestial state.

The Essenians were a sect among the Jews, not as powerful, but nevertheless almost as well known and widely recognized as the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. It is very noteworthy that no single word of condemnation for these people ever escapes the lips of any New Testament writer. While Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees are bitterly and frequently denounced, Essenians are never mentioned, probably because the writers of the gospels were themselves Essenians, and the majority of the earliest converts from Judaism to Christianity were from among the Essenian ranks. Christianity, in its primitive aspects, was simply a modified and enlarged Essenianism, its principal tenets being a strictly monotheistic recognition of one only God, whom Jesus had taught his disciples to call the Father, the non-resistance of injuries, voluntary poverty, and a simple communistic mode of life. In the second chapter of the Acts we are told that those who steadfastly continued in the apostolic doctrine and fellowship sold all their private property, and that the whole of their possessions was divided among the members of the Christian fraternity. In the Roman Catholic Church voluntary poverty has often been recommended. St. Francis, we are told, prayed for poverty; but, as a rule, there has been little danger to the Christian Church from any such cause, as Christian dignitaries, above all people, have devised every conceivable means for amassing wealth, even by trading upon the tenderest and deepest concern which friends feel for the welfare of their departed loved ones.

The question before us is an intensely practical, personal and present one, and we need not concern ourselves with the views of ancient teachers so much as with the present requirements of the modern society of which we form a part. Is it or is it not incompatible with true spirituality to be the possessor of large stores of material wealth? Are we to

conclude that without sacrificing our earthly honors and riches we cannot enter heaven? Can we only advance our spiritual by sacrificing our temporal interests? These questions imperatively demand satisfactory answers from the lips of modern teachers of ethics, and others whose special duty it is to discuss and solve, if possible, the difficult social problems which are hourly demanding solution at their hands. We think that after a careful study of our subject, we may readily arrive at something like this conclusion: That, to take charge of wealth and use it honorably for the good of the race is not only permissible, but is the plain duty of every one who becomes the honest steward of a portion of earthly treasure. Ill-gotten gains are not ours to use, and thus the right to dispose of them belongs to others; our meddling with what is rightfully another's is an invasion of another's rights and liberties.

We wish before we proceed further to say a few words upon the curious text itself. Our first conclusion is, the utter impossibility of a camel ever going through the eye of a needle. The mere assertion, "With God all things are possible," is no way out of the difficulty; for it must be in the nature of things impossible for an infinite being to be other than he is. God is not bounded or limited by law, as materialists affirm, even when admitting the possibility of the existence of a God; but the laws of nature are themselves the motions and manifestations of the divine intelligence. The will of Infinite Spirit, Eternal Mind, is made known unto us through our observation of the laws which govern the universe, and thus it is impossible for laws to be other than they are, as there is no God to interfere with them, they being the expressions of the purpose of the only God. What a far larger thought of God is this than that entertained usually by the Christian, who believes in the interference of God with nature, who cherishes faith in miraculous interpositions and special providences. To the eye of the enlightened Theist the laws of nature are simply the expressions of the unintermittent life of Deity. Nature is permeated with the divine life; we cannot be where God is not; we are no nearer to God in one world than in another; and when we sing, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," we do not mean that God can ever be any nearer to us than he now is, but only that we may be made more deeply conscious of our oneness with the Infinite, and feel no longer that there is a conflict between our human wills and the divine. The fixed and unalterable decrees of nature are so just, loving and wise, that, could we change nature by our petitions, the answers to our prayers would bring us curses, which, in our foolish blindness, we might momentarily call blessings. All puerile conceptions of prayer affecting God are fast be-

coming effete in all civilized communities, and yet we continue to pray, because prayer changes us and makes us receptive to benign influences, which are otherwise excluded from us by reason of our materiality.

We intend to waste no time in discussing the childish query, Will or can God ever cause a phenomenon so unnatural as the passage of a camel through the eye of a needle to occur? Our answer to it is decidedly in the negative. God never contradicts himself; and as God's own life is the soul of the laws of being, God cannot alter himself. What he is and what is his will is unceasingly revealed to us through our study of the unalterable decrees of fate. But there is an explanation of the passage very simple and suggestive, which lies close at hand. The large gates leading into Jerusalem were closed early in the evening, as is the custom in all Oriental cities. After sundown, when the large gates were shut, a small gate called the needle's eye was opened for the admission of belated travelers. To this small gate Jesus refers—a gate just large enough for a small, unladen camel to pass through, but so narrow that a large camel, even though unladen, could only squeeze its body through with the utmost difficulty, while no laden camel of any size could enter without first being stripped of its load. The imagery is glowing and apt, though intensely local, and from this fact, almost more than from any other, critics who allow their reason to triumph over blind credulity, infer that the words of Christ were specially intended for his Jewish listeners, and were in no exceptional sense a message delivered to all humanity.

Jesus probably shared many of the opinions and hopes of his countrymen with regard to the appearance of an individual Messiah, whose work should only terminate in the complete emancipation of the Jewish nation from Roman thralldom, and its final and perfect triumph over every obstacle. He seems in the latter part of his life to have been bitterly disappointed because Jerusalem was doomed to fall through the perfidy of her children, who stoned the prophets and crucified the last messenger who was sent unto them. The prevalent sin of that age was the inordinate love of riches—the identical vice of the present day. History is ever repeating itself; laws fixed and immutable decree that certain results shall flow from given causes. The love of gold, the thirst for sensuous luxury, despite marvelous intellectual attainment and proverbial artistic achievement, led to the downfall both of Greece and Rome. Greece, the land of philosophy, the land which gave to humanity a Plato, a Socrates, an Aristotle; Greece, which gave birth to the forms of every perfect model of manly and womanly beauty; Greece, whose poetry, whose statuary,

whose mythology are the glory of the earth; Greece, whose remains of ancient splendor are among the most wonderful and magnificent in the world; Greece, in spite of all her teachers, her poets, her sculptors, her brave and noble athletes, must fall under the yoke of the Roman invader, when Rome was young; when her sons were temperate, and when valor stood side by side with honor. But what of Rome herself? Having engulfed Greece, having swallowed up Judea, having conquered the most eligible situations in Europe and Africa, its destiny was to fall a miserable prey to the invader. The insurrections of hardier and braver nations soon accomplished the ruin of the great and dreaded empire. And why? Surely not because of imperial bankruptcy; surely not because of the invincible might of northern hordes; surely from no other cause than internal degeneracy; the insatiate love of ease; the determination to gratify the lower instincts, come what might. This moral pollution, coexistent with fabulous wealth on the patrician side, and abject poverty and grinding slavery on the plebeian, led assuredly and solely to the utter discomfiture of the Roman hosts. Men will fight for their country until it ceases to be their country; then they may be found ready to betray it into the hands of its enemies. Patriotism and love of home will cease just so soon as one's country becomes a prison, and one's home a wretched garret, in which the sons of toil are forced to eke out a miserable subsistence. When their ceaseless toil is only to fill to repletion the coffers of capitalists who have already so much money that it is more of a burden than a joy to them, they cannot be expected to lay down their lives that their oppression may continue.

Ignoring the literal interpretation of the text which we have given you as the correct one, we are willing to go so far as to say that it is as impossible for a rich, selfish man to enter into the kingdom of heaven while multitudes are starving around him, as for a real, live camel to go through the eye of one of your cambric-needles. Those who accumulate wealth by sacrificing every noble impulse; those who are satisfied to live in splendid palaces, and roll along fashionable avenues in princely equipages, clad in the costliest fabrics of the world, caring nothing for the happiness or misery of their fellow-beings, are so completely unable to perceive a kingdom of heaven that no spot in the universe, however pure and lovely, could be to them a heaven in the true sense. "The kingdom of heaven is within you"; "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"; such words as these cannot be too frequently reiterated in this mammon-loving age; neither can we too emphatically protest against the delusive fancy of our going at death to some local heaven, where we shall be eternally hap-

py, unless we have on earth cultivated such tempers of mind as outlive the body, and are in themselves of the nature of the kingdom of heaven.

One very important question arises here, and it is this: Supposing one is rich, what ought he to do to make the best possible use of that which has come into his possession? If you feel that your wealth has been dishonestly acquired; if you feel that it has come into your hands unjustly, then the onerous responsibility attaching to you as its possessor should be accepted by you as the necessary penalty of your transgression. You cannot always restore ill-gotten gains to their rightful owners; often they are beyond the reach of human justice; but their afflicted and injured brethren are yet with you; the poor and wronged have not yet ceased out of the land. If you are conscious of holding anything to which your conscience tells you you cannot rightfully lay claim, then "sell all thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven"; a heaven which will here and now enter your heart, and fill you with divine peace—the peace flowing from an approving conscience. But, then, how can we best give to the poor? Shall we squander riches upon any and every applicant? Shall we relieve the beggar on the doorstep, who will rush to the nearest dram-shop, and consume in drunkenness the alms bestowed upon him? If wealth is thrown in this direction, where is the charity or the justice of its bestowal? It does the pauper no good, it only fans into a fiercer flame the fire which threatens to consume the little manhood left in the besotted wretch who would work upon your too indiscriminate sympathies. All cases should be investigated; and while no hungry person should be sent from your door unfed, a true recognition of the best interests of the race will lead to systematic and intelligent direction of charitable action, leading to the employment of the able-bodied unemployed, so that the just compensation they receive as an equivalent for services rendered shall place them in an independent and self-respecting position; while the sick poor must be cared for and nourished in homes and asylums specially adapted to their comfort and recovery.

If any of you have in your possession wealth, remember that wealth is common property. You may have acquired the right to use it, but no one can acquire the right to hoard it, because its accumulation is due to the coöperative industries of many individuals, not to the isolated efforts of one. If you can discover a tract of waste land, and cultivate it till it becomes a garden, through your energies being infused into it, its improvement being due to you, its produce is yours by right to use; but in the production of fruitfulness you are not the only

agent. Would the fruits appear were it not for sun, and rain, and air, and inherent properties of the earth? These means of inducing fruitfulness were not created by you; you do not own these universal agencies, you have no vested rights in the globe itself. Thus, being dependent upon influences over which you have no control, as well as upon others under your sway, you may have a share in certain districts, and all they contain and produce; but in no sense are they yours exclusively; they can, never be your private property. We certainly do not go so far as to say that some people are not honestly better off than others. If you are more industrious than others, you have a right to control a larger share of the earth and its wealth. If you have had property left to you by your ancestors, and it came under their sway by reason of their legitimate industries, you have a right to employ it as they had a right to bequeath the use of it to whomsoever they pleased. In such cases as these to neglect an opportunity of using material things aright would be to wrap a talent in a napkin, and to most unwarrantably shirk a plain duty.

If you are offered a position of trust, if you can honestly acquire and spend money, you know full well that that position will be filled by some one if not by you; you know that some one will control that wealth, and thus it is only a question of whether you have a right to let fall upon another, and possibly a less capable person than yourself, a responsibility the fates seem desirous you should assume. Our own opinion in this matter is very clear and decided. We should have not the slightest hesitancy in accepting any position offered us, or any amount of wealth honestly acquired, except on the grounds of incompetency to fulfill the duties of exalted station. We should, however, feel bound by the most solemn moral obligations to act as faithful stewards of wealth and position; we should never dare to feel that, as tyrants, we could trample under foot our poorer brethren because fortune had smiled on us while its frowns were being bestowed on them. Gold is a power in all lands to-day; monopolies are curses. Society does look up to birth, breeding, exalted position and brilliant exterior. We must take the world as it is, and commence reforming it by turning its treasures into such channels as shall lead to the speedy destruction of the evils consequent upon the misuse of the things the world esteems most highly. Rich and stylish persons who are already such, can and must do their particular part in the regeneration of society; they can influence others where the poor man would have no power; they can fascinate others to walk in the paths of virtue, while all remonstrances issuing from those less favorably situated in the eyes of men would be scornfully rejected. The use of money

and position by competent persons is a necessity until all men are equally capable of controlling wealth.

As Joseph Cook very truly said about three years ago in one of his Monday lectures in this city, make all men equal on Monday morning, and on Saturday night one would be drunk in the gutter, while another would be the happy centre of a sphere of ever increasing felicity, prosperity, and usefulness. We are not all born for the same kind of work; we cannot all fill the same positions; some must be capitalists and others laborers; but be it so, capital and labor must unite their interests so that nothing can benefit the employer without at the same time enriching the workman. Capital and labor must unite their forces and divide the proceeds of what cannot be without their blended activity. Work, not support in idleness, is what the toiling, struggling masses need; regular and sufficient compensation being paid to all workers, not five cents to a poor girl or emaciated woman for making a shirt, by companies who take a dastardly advantage of distress that they may accumulate immense fortunes. Those of you who can afford to pay proper prices for your clothing, are supporting a gigantic injustice when your parsimony leads you to buy articles sold under the proper cost of making. Why is the market deluged with millions of unnaturally cheap goods, but because thousands of almost starving women and children are shamefully underpaid for the toil which often in a few short years makes their bodies inmates of pauper graves?

Wisdom in the expenditure of one's means is the great lack to-day. A wise method of supporting industry needs to supplant a morbid and self-indulgent monster who has dared to usurp the hallowed name of Charity. Let all, then, who have means to work with, remember that their terrestrial possessions are held by them on trust for humanity. Human needs as at present existing can only be supplied as you find employment for and justly remunerate for their work the millions who seek relief at your hands. It is the easiest thing in the world for a rich man to assist in establishing a kingdom of heaven on earth, in which justice shall be the supreme governor, if he will only voluntarily become no longer rich, in the sense that he no longer hoards up his wealth, thereby becoming a miserable miser, but distributes it all among society by a fair and proper support of legitimate industries. The wisest laws will make it impossible for any person to retain land, money, or aught else, longer than they use these things aright.

In England to-day the land laws are so shamefully oppressive and unjust that a man's ancestral claim to property makes him able to keep in absolute idleness many acres of the

most fruitful land on the island, whereas, if compelled to cultivate it, it would yield the richest of produce, cheapen the necessities of life immensely, give employment to thousands of unemployed persons, and at the same time very largely increase the yearly income of the landed noblemen. Those who read anything of English history know that some centuries ago the land was torn from the inhabitants who justly owned the right to inhabit it, as their energies had made it habitable. Rapine, murder, every form of atrocity, resulted in the expulsion of the inhabitants, the burning of their homes, and the establishment of a vast hunting-ground for dissolute and dishonest noblemen on the site of their hard-earned homesteads. In the days of feudalism privileges were granted to the aristocracy which remain unto this day, so that the laws of the land allow the most fruitful tracts of country to be reserved for the cruel slaughter of game by men and women who have no better pursuits wherewith to occupy their time. There can be no heaven in England so long as these rich men are permitted to desecrate by cruel sport the land which the people have a right to demand for their own use. We do not say that the reputed owners should be thrust out; rather give them a chance to show themselves worthy to retain their possessions; force them to use their land, and let them share in the benefits of such use. If with these just demands they are ready to comply, if some one must be in charge, why not these men as well as others?

While every form of extravagance and profligacy is detestable, and destructive of the best interests of a community, to live nearly up to one's income is always desirable. Ways and means of expenditure must of course be left in all cases to the conscience and judgment of the expender. Extravagant tastes are often inveighed against by reformers and others, but we think sometimes ignorantly. Is it wrong to give several thousands of dollars for a very beautiful work of art? We think not; the talent of the artist is worthy of recognition; his time and energies have been expended in the creation of his beautiful picture. Art itself is purifying and elevating; your own and other lives may be elevated by gazing upon the semblance of true, living loveliness. The compensation and encouragement of genius is worthy and helpful to society; and thus your costly paintings, if they are paid for, may have done much toward inducing riches to flow into their rightful channels, the pocket of the artist being a legitimate resting-place for some of your money, as the gold there deposited provides the man of genius with the means of enriching the world still further as he continues to exercise his heaven-born gift.

Is it wrong to spend a great deal of money upon dress? Certainly it is if fine raiment feeds unhallowed pride, and lifts you in your own estimation so far above your fellow beings that you grow to treat them with contempt; but if by dressing well you do not injure your own power of doing good, then to give one thousand dollars for a dress, and one hundred dollars for a bonnet is not the worst possible way of spending money, as milliners and dressmakers are often honorable and even charitable people, who, if well paid themselves, will afford employment to many girls and women whose salvation from shame and misery in the near future may depend largely upon proper employment being provided for them.

To sum up these few thoughts we must give just a moment to a consideration of what the kingdom of heaven really is. Wherever or whatever a distant and local heaven may be, we should all remember that this world is as much a part of God's universe as any other, and that there is no possible reason why this earth should always be styled "a vale of tears." Happiness and heaven may be in the present as well as in the future; for have we not all deeply realized

how utterly unsatisfying are all outward things without contentment of mind and peace of soul? As well take a deaf man to the opera, and ask him to enjoy the inimitable vocalization of some distinguished artist; as well take a blind man through the choicest of the picture galleries and conservatories of the world, and ask him to admire the beauty of form and color they display, as introduce a man destitute of the love of virtue and of the love of neighbor into a realm thronged with angels whose everlasting happiness springs from their unceasing efforts to bestow happiness on others. All angelic joy springs from pure benevolence; all unsullied bliss is the outcome of unselfish devotion to human well-being. For those who wish to hug to themselves all treasures after death, purifying fires must remain, that selfishness and pride may be scorched out of existence ere they can experience the faintest knowledge of a true heaven.

Strive earnestly so to live, so to employ all riches of soul, mind and body, that, having developed here within your breast a true kingdom of heaven, death shall only give you larger freedom to enjoy it.

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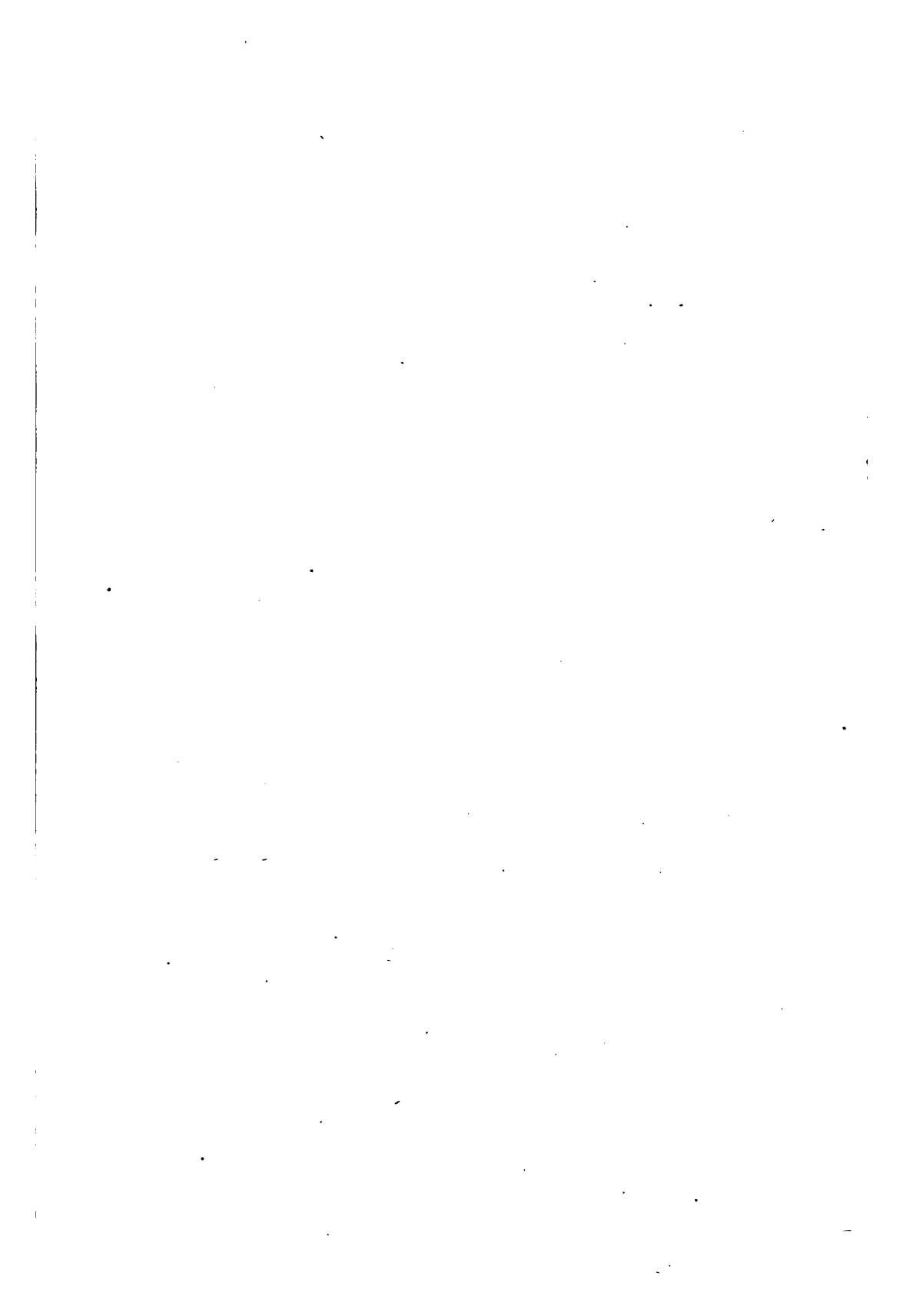
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THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, AND ITS ETHICAL TEACHING.

PART I.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt. v. 3.*

The Sermon on the Mount has long been considered throughout Christendom as the most comprehensive and authoritative sermon ever preached by mortal lips; and has been and still is looked upon as a final standard of ethical perfection by all Trinitarian, and by many Unitarian Christians. Not only is it so widely admired in the Christian world; it compels the respect and admiration, though by no means in all cases the unqualified approbation, of the most intelligent persons of all shades of opinion throughout the world who have ever read and studied it. So broad is its catholicity, so diverse its beatitudes, so all-embracing its practical directions, that no one can possibly rise from a careful perusal of it without feeling that he has been face to face with one of the world's greatest literary and moral masterpieces.

Looking at Jesus and the Bible from the point of view of the Freethinker rather than from that of the Christian, it must be expected of us that we criticise rather than blindly accept the words of our text. To us, a text is a kind of suggestive motto; it affords a convenient and appropriate heading to a discourse, and, in our opinion, certainly need not always be taken from the Bible. Many of the finest sermons preached have been delivered from Shaksperian, Confucian and other texts outside of the Old and New Testaments. No doubt the time is near at hand when a Sacred Anthology will replace the Bible in the Sunday and day school, in the child's library, and also in the desk of the most liberal churches in this and other lands; but the compilation of an Anthology is a very difficult and expensive task,

requiring vast research, much leisure and a vast expenditure of money, before it can be placed at a low price in the hands of the public at large.

So many million copies of the Bible have been sold that its cost is merely nominal, and it contains so many good teachings that the people will not readily let it go, though the most serious and intelligent among those whose duty it is to take charge of the young at the present day, consider that the Bible as a whole is by no means a suitable book to place in the hands of children. Much of it they ought never to see until they arrive at adult age. Much of it is to them wholly incomprehensible, and therefore entirely valueless, while more still is of a nature that gives bulk to a volume without either instructing or entertaining youthful readers. The publication of such works as Moncure Conway's "Sacred Anthology" and Giles B. Stebbins's "Chapters from the Bibles of the Ages" does much good, as it places side by side the finest passages selected from various scriptures; but the price of these volumes is altogether too high to render them universally available, and their contents are not sufficiently diversified and satisfying to the great body of liberal thinkers all over the world, to give them such an extended sale as would place them in the market at a very low figure. If a Bible is necessary in the public schools, the kind of Bible needed is one that shall fairly represent all the greatest teachers of the ages, and be so cosmopolitan and strictly moral rather than doctrinal in its nature, that it shall give no offence to any one, unless it be to those sectarians who will find fault with its omissions; while neither the Pope of Rome, Col. Ingersoll, nor any man in any position be-

tween the representatives of two opposite extremes of thought, can object to it on moral grounds.

The conclusion arrived at by most of the most advanced among religious liberals to-day is, that doctrines should be opposed rather on account of their immoral tendencies than on account of their incomprehensibility. There is so much in nature that not even the wisest can ever hope to fully understand in this life, that it is simply ridiculous for persons to denounce as false everything they fail to comprehend. Many questions must be left open, as without much greater light than we at present possess it is impossible for us to close them. We shall be confronted with the mysterious and inexplicable, so long as there is in us any room for the admission of added truth and the development of hitherto unawakened powers of research and comprehension.

In our crusade against those doctrines which we feel inclined to stigmatize as the pernicious heresies of the age, we attack only those trees that bear such fruit as assists in poisoning the moral constitution of the community; pronouncing no dogmatic opinion whatever in regard to purely speculative points of doctrine which have no direct bearing upon the conduct of life. For instance, we most persistently attack the doctrine of Biblical infallibility; not because we deem it impossible for God to write a book with his own hand, and deliver it complete into the hands of men as a sure and certain guide to everlasting happiness, but because the book for which certain men claim divine and direct inspiration is of such a nature that the acceptance of every portion of it can have no other tendency than a demoralizing one. Had the Bible no words in it other than such as appeal directly to man's highest moral sense; did it advocate no course of action other than a course which, if followed out completely, would lead to the highest conceivable results, however skeptical we might be as individuals with respect to its miraculous authorship, we should not feel that if men obeyed it implicitly, they were in danger of falling into injurious modes of life; but as it is, the tendency of very much Biblical teaching is downward rather than upward; blind faith in it as a divine message will lead to a multitude of positively injurious practices. On this account, and on this account only, do we vigorously inveigh against the theories of those who claim for it an untainted sanctity and complete divinity.

Even the teachings of Jesus are not of such a nature that they can be indiscriminately followed without deleterious effects upon society. As a whole they are super-excellent; but most decidedly are they not without some important blemishes. Whether these blemishes

are due to the great Galilean teacher or to his successors, it is almost impossible for any scholarly critic to decide; as it is painfully evident that we can learn from history so very little about that great and good man, Jesus of Nazareth, that all attempts to pronounce with certainty upon the subject of his personal teachings are futile.

When speaking early last summer of the New Testament and its revision, we reminded you that no manuscripts now extant date back further than to the fourth and fifth centuries. Originals themselves are nowhere to be found; every so-called original is three or four hundred years younger than a real original would be. How excessively foolish, then, for ministers to tell their congregations that in all difficult matters they are to turn to the Bible, and let Jesus settle their difficulties for them. We may entirely mistake the meaning of Jesus. As his words have come down to us in garbled form in their English dress, they may appear quite different from what they were in original Semitic or Syro-phenician; it being most improbable that Greek was the language in which Jesus clothed his ideas, and in which his early followers clothed theirs, as it was a tongue almost as unintelligible to an ancient Jewish as it is to a modern English audience. Hebrew is the language of all others held sacred by the Jews and employed by them to-day, in synagogue and temple services; and thus it stands to reason that many of the books of the Old Testament, of Hebrew origin, are entitled to rank as original documents, or at least direct copies of originals, the Israelites having always been most careful in their preservation of every letter of the law.

But for the New Testament no such claim can with any degree of plausibility be made, as the teachings ascribed to Jesus are almost identical with those of earlier Essenians, the Essenians being a recognized sect among the Jews at least 150 B. C. The Sermon on the Mount is peculiarly an exposition of the views of the Essenians, as contradistinguished from those of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were their constant and bitter opponents. The Pharisees were the Ritualists or High Church party among the Jews; their representatives in the Christian world are to be found principally among those who keep a great number of festival and fast days; who pray in stereotyped language at regular and frequent intervals; who like to see the altars of churches adorned with flowers and lighted candles, who attach great importance to sacraments and priestly vestments; who, in a word, value ecclesiastical pomp more highly than anything else. It does not appear that Jesus directly rebuked them for their simple love of ceremony, as a cultivation of art can never do harm in and of itself. What he at-

tacked was their dastardly hypocrisy, the immoralities they hoped to atone for by the use of long prayers, which, proceeding from no real desire to do good, were characterized by the great teacher as "vain repetitions." When teaching in parable, as was his wont, when speaking to all save a few initiated ones, Jesus satirizes and condemns the self-righteous Pharisee who goes into the temple to tell God how good he has been, as though the Infinite needed to be reminded of the virtues of his children; while, without approving necessarily of the conduct of the publicans (the tax-gatherers), who were often extortionate and unmerciful, he says that a poor publican who is conscious of wrong-doing and feels his need of mercy is on the road to amendment and in a far more justifiable frame of mind than the ceremonialist who attaches infinite importance to religious forms and cares little or nothing for inward purity and good will toward his neighbors. The Sadducees were the secularists or skeptics among the Jews; they denied the resurrection and questioned there being any conscious future for man after the death of the body.

These two contending sects, both powerful and lovers of money, were constantly at war with each other, the Pharisees representing ecclesiastical tyranny, and the Sadducees the aggressive force of a worldly and selfish materialism; while the Essenians were the spiritualistic party, attaching supreme importance to the soul, and almost utterly disregarding the wants of the body. They were like separations in the ray of light into three primary colors, divided so as to be rendered antagonistic the one to the other. They were like men who would declare in favor of blue being the only color of light, while their opponents maintained on the one hand that all light was red, and on the other that it was all yellow. Theological disputants are like men who limit existence within the compass of their knowledge of it. They have each and all got hold of some truth, established some fact, but their ray of truth is only a fragment of the entire beam, while they mistake it for the centre of the universe around which every planet and soul must revolve. There is a residue of truth in every conception of life and duty. No theories are pure fiction, but the reflection of realities in their true form and size is due to a perfectly pure and untroubled condition in the reflecting medium. Human imagination and fancy are too often like troubled streams; like blurred mirrors; like darkly-painted or ill-washed windows; hence the facts of nature are distorted, and but very partially beheld when they reach human vision.

The Pharisees were proud-spirited; they had a high idea of their own importance, and carried ceremony to a ridiculous excess; their errors and weaknesses were legion; and yet, if

we will carefully investigate the groundworks of their faith and conduct, we shall find much in their system to admire; its perversions and exaggerations alone need to be shunned. Their high estimate of themselves was only an evil when abused and carried to an extreme. "Blessed are the poor in spirit" can be so interpreted as to make of the beatitude a veritable curse. The Essenians without doubt obeyed it often too literally, and carried the practice of self-disregard to an unwarrantable extreme. Self-respect is the one thing above all others a boy or girl needs to maintain when he or she leaves home to mingle with the busy throng in the outer world. "Never forget the respect you owe to yourself," is the parting monition of the wise parent to the departing child. Loss of self-respect is the loss of that which alone buoys up many a sorely-trying and grievously-tempted man or woman. Never do anything of which your own conscience is ashamed. Never commit the worst of all sins, the sin against your own sense of right. It is possible to outrage the laws and customs of society, and yet not to degrade oneself in one's own estimation. No matter how grotesque, erroneous or injurious certain of your acts and words may be, if you feel that you are doing right you may be in the abstract ever so wrong, but relatively you are right because you are doing what you believe to be right. Ignorant you certainly are, needing the discipline of unpleasant consequences following upon your misguided actions to extricate you from your present slough of ignorance, and lift you into realms of higher knowledge, but criminal you are not. Fanatical and insane you may be, but criminality is the condition of violating one's own sense of justice.

Anything but poverty of spirit is needed to stem the tide of ignorance and wrong flowing so swiftly and powerfully in the society of today. Positive, strong-willed, noble-minded, high-spirited men and women are needed to cope with life's manifold difficulties and dangers. Those who are by nature psychologists or mesmeric operators are in duty bound to exert their positive will-force in the elevation of society. We have no right to refuse to use our power to rule, as, if we do not exert our force for good, others will be sure to appear who will not hesitate one moment before they exert theirs for evil. Have you ability to sway others? Can you readily use your power to influence your weaker brethren? Hold not back one instant from the exercise of these wonderful and occult powers with which you are by nature, and also, no doubt, by culture, endowed. The just use of psychologic power is its exercise, as a strong arm thrown around the weak and unwary, to save them from falling into the trap set for them by the vicious

and selfish. Exert your strength, use your influence on the side of right. The mesmerist control of a sensitive by a powerful operator will often rescue from the tyranny of the wicked many a tender and susceptible person who would otherwise fall, body and mind, into the clutches of the destroyer. Have you a friend who is easily influenced to take strong drink, who is readily led to frequent haunts of dissipation? Do you see that other wills are leading him downward into an abyss of woe? and shall you, idly and irresolutely, stand by and see the wrong consummated, and your friend disgraced? Certainly not; such conduct would be perfidious at your hands. Your brother's soul will some day be required of you; exert your force to enable him to withstand the powers of evil.

The very same psychologic sway exerted by the strong over the weak which leads to moral, mental and physical degradation, which underlies obsession and insanity, is the sole cure for the evil which its misuse has caused. Are there any among your friends who are afflicted by reason of their subjection to the wills of others in or out of the flesh? They can only be dispossessed of these torturing controls as they fall into the hands of beings on a higher plane of spiritual development, whose higher life will come in as the stronger man, to drive the strong usurper out of the castle of the poor victim's organism. Will-power in medicine is to supersede every agent lower than the direct force of soul itself. In surgical operations it is to be unfailing, and always a healthful and invigorating substitute for every kind of anæsthetic. In government, in the State, the school, the home, it is to supplant every species of brutality, and is, in a word, to be the one great lever, lifting mankind into a realm of being where mind and not matter is the acknowledged deity and master. Poverty of spirit, then, if it signifies irresoluteness, cowardice, or the absence of sufficient moral courage and confidence in one's abilities to insure success in a righteous cause, is decidedly reprehensible, and by no means consistent with the general tenor and actions of the great man whom the evangelist says pronounced it blessed.

Let us look a little more deeply into the matter; pride, arrogance, haughtiness of spirit, were the great vices of the age. One extreme always leads to another. Irrational atheism is to-day the reaction from unreasonable superstition. Everywhere one extreme needs to be counteracted by its opposite; and thus, before the forces of nature can attain to equilibrium in the human body or mind, it is often necessary that they should show signs of being in an extreme state directly opposed to the extreme from which they are being rescued. Many things are valuable as medicines which are in-

jurious as foods and beverages. Tobacco is an instance of this. Unlike alcohol, it is not manufactured through a perversion of natural products, having each a known and legitimate use; it grows, and is, as the Mormons assert, a remedy for diseases of the horse. It has also curative properties applicable to other creatures, man included. The general consumption of it as habitual among Americans, Englishmen and others is, however, a fearful curse to many a nation. Everything that grows has its work to do; its work, however, is often terribly misunderstood, and sometimes willfully; as the temptation to pander to morbid appetites is in most cases immensely strong. The emasculating practices of the Brahmans, the disrespect shown to the body by many philosophers of Greece, and notably by the Essenians, the utter lack of importance attached by many religious fanatics to all material means of life, these things are in themselves abnormal states of feeling and action. If they became prevalent among all classes of society their effect would be disastrous to the progress of the world. To take a vow of chastity, to live a purely celibate life, may be quite the correct thing for a few people to do; but if Essenian and Shaker modes of life became universal the human race would soon die a natural death.

All extremes are injurious except in the sense of correcting their opposites, and giving the pendulum of human thought a reactionary swing. A great deal of New Testament teaching is simply reactionary; it was a corrective of the vices of the times, a strong purgative, a powerful medicine; its letter killeth in many instances, but its spirit giveth life. And what is its spirit? Not its words, but its motives. A clergyman said to us the other day, "If you were in a difficult position, not knowing how to act for the best, would you not go to the Bible and seek information from its pages concerning the action of Jesus in a similar situation, and if you could find any text advising a course of action by proclaiming it his, would you not feel it your duty to act in the way there recommended?" Our answer to him was: "We should not find it necessary to act as you propose, as the probabilities are that the evangelists have omitted many of the most important actions and sayings of Jesus, owing to the inability of a lesser mind to do justice to a greater. No doubt their hero was greatly their superior, and it needs an equal to faithfully portray any character. Again, we must remind you of the doubtful authenticity of the oft-translated text; and thirdly, we must express our decided conviction that it is not our duty to follow any man blindly, but to seek individual light through the mediumship of our own consciences. However, we gladly and thoroughly make this concession, after having some-

what strongly assailed your position: we are willing to do exactly as we believe Jesus would have done, and would wish us to do under the circumstances, and that is, to call no man master, to follow no one's lead, but to act according to the dictates of conscience in all things; thus we can follow Jesus, and indeed every great teacher, in the true sense, by obeying his injunctions in the spirit, even though our opinions, actions and convictions may be widely divergent at times from his." Our clerical friend said no more, but seemed tacitly to consent to our position.

To apply this view of duty to our text this morning, we find ourselves compelled to stand on new ground, ground never set foot upon by distinctively Christian exponents of the Sermon on the Mount, compelling us to ask a question entirely foreign to that asked by the churches of Christendom, viz.: Is poverty of spirit advantageous or detrimental to the best interests of modern society? not, did Jesus pronounce it blessed or otherwise? If, as a tree judged by its fruit, it stands the test, and approves itself to our highest judgment, then let us eulogize and cultivate it. If its fruits are not conducive to the highest welfare of mankind, even though Jesus did recommend it, we are bound to spurn it, and in so doing are closely conforming to the course of action pursued by this same illustrious reformer who repealed Mosaic commands, even though claiming to fulfill the law. The law of God is not written on tables of stone, or on parchment scrolls. Human nature is God's Bible, every child being a new edition of the sacred volume, constantly emanating from the divine press. If poverty of spirit, irresoluteness, a too mean value set upon one's talents and influence be an evil, docility of spirit, humility, tenderness of heart, compassionateness, and above all, purity of spirit, is the great unfailing source of good to the world. And this is what Jesus and all really great teachers have recommended and practiced, except in moments of bitterness and wrath when they have, unfortunately, set aside their own counsels and shown anything but loveliness of spirit, displaying beyond righteous indignation against wrong, earth-born impetuosity and the ordinary weaknesses of humankind. Jesus was at times, as he is represented to us, the reverse of that which he tells his followers to be. His conduct at times was anything but gentle and forgiving; clearly showing how hard it is for any man, however great, to live up at all times to his loftiest conceptions. His ideal was so high that he frequently failed to reach it. His faults were very natural, but to imitate them because they were his would be the height of folly. We have very little reason to complain of Christians for carrying out the law of non-resistance too far, as a more bloody history has

never been written than the history of Christianity. If Jesus did tell people to resent no injuries, he really went none too far, as the amount of resentment shown toward all who oppose them is the crying sin of this people, and indeed of all others.

To judge correctly of the teachings of any man or school of thinkers, we must judge of a teacher not by his exceptional so much as by his general utterances. A little further on, in Matthew, fifth chapter, we find the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Purity seems ever to have been the one great feature in the life of the Nazarene. Intellectually, scientifically, philosophically, he may be open to criticism, but his pure morality of life and teaching seems beyond cavil. He was virtually and thoroughly a moralist, and while a correct translation of an old Greek word in a comparatively ancient manuscript may not justify our substitution of the word pure for poor in the first beatitude, we shall decidedly take the liberty of telling you that the universal testimony of the ages is in favor of its substitution in a permanent beatitude. In addition to this all-expressive adjective we might add many others, humble, loving, kind, without conveying any dubious meaning.

Experience has ever, and will ever, testify to the great need of purity and kindness if we are ever to reform the world effectually. Belligerence has had its day, having been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Civilized man is everywhere endeavoring to banish warfare and rule by love rather than by fear. The resistance of injuries in a spirit of harsh resentment is the one awful blight which destroys the progress of civilization everywhere. Any tiger can fight with tooth and claw, and if only physically more powerful than his adversary, can easily slay him. Wars have cost the nations so dear that the experience humanity has had in fighting has led to the expression of a general desire for the abolition of the sword, by the really great men and women who represent the highest moral and intellectual strata of civilized society. To fight with the body and with cruel weapons, is to go back to the darkness of savage nations, to employ the only methods possible among barbarians. The resentment of wrong in the spirit of spite and retaliation, is to add fresh fuel to an already fierce and destructive fire. To fight an adversary is to place yourself on a level with him, not above his plane.

We do not tell you that outwardly in this life all virtue is rewarded, and vice punished; we do not hold out to you the possession of the earth as the reward of your meekness, but we do proclaim that an approving conscience, that inward satisfaction, and that certain bliss and even glory in the hereafter, is the inevitable re-

sult of a cultivation of true charity. If you abstain from animal and savage methods of defense, if you do but encourage the soul and mind to give you their aid in all extremities, cool-headed, kind-hearted, superior to your adversaries in every mental and moral sense, you will put to shame and eventually triumph over a whole race of pugilists. Maintain your self-respect, defend the right, but defend it as an intelligent creature, possessing spirit and intellect, should. Leave pugilism to your moral inferiors; and as you seek only to control evil, as you overpower it with love, will you find, growing within you here, a true kingdom of heaven, which will live and grow within you in all future spheres.

It is quite common for Materialists and others to decry New Testament ethics without ever putting the teachings of the hero of the Gospels to the test. Our course of argument is ever to point out the unwisdom and futility of an opposition founded upon simple bias, or the exhibition of party spirit. We cannot agree with the Christian, because he takes everything for granted, and advocates a course of action solely because his Bible, his Christ or his minister advises it. Equally radical exception must be taken to the action of those critics who belligerently denounce what others affirm, simply in the spirit of blind antagonism. The Bible is shamefully abused by two classes of people—the one its sworn friends, who foolishly defend it, and the other its spiteful adversaries, who condemn it without reason. Nothing can be more frightful than the conduct of the Christian church, in the days of its undisputed power, toward all who differed from it; but nothing can be more inconsistent with the Sermon on the Mount than this same reprehensible behavior. In this hostility toward every innovator, in this intolerance manifested to every reformer, the Church has not followed its reputed head, but has, on the contrary, imitated those who persecuted him and finally put him to death.

If there is anything puerile and fanatical in the command to turn the other cheek to the smiter when one is smitten already by his cruel blow; if it is mere fanaticism to travel two miles without object when coerced into traveling one by an enemy, the sin of the times and the peculiar vice of the Christian church has certainly not been due to a following of any such precepts; for it has resented real and even fancied injuries, to the extent of burning heretics at the stake because they refused to yield to it; it has lowered itself in the eyes of all humanitarians, and formed its own coffin. If we were to live up to the ethical teachings of the Christ, we should have to do exactly what his reputed followers as a body have never even tried to do, and we should be imitating in

some way those whom all true men and women are unanimous in lauding as highest examples of yet attained human perfection. Gautama Buddha, the saintly hero of Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia," was a remarkable type of utter self-abnegation, and we may even add, without irreverence, fanaticism. By fanaticism, as here applied, we mean a following out of one idea somewhat too exclusively. His conduct to his father and beautiful young wife whom he had married but a short while before, to whom he was devotedly attached, and who loved him passionately in return, was not conduct we could invite any young husband and dutiful son to imitate. His leaving the palace by night, causing the direst grief to his family, was certainly an action which, with our light, we cannot possibly approve; and yet, who can fail to behold in the great renunciation anything short of the intensest agony of a loving heart to relieve human woes by sharing them and taking upon itself, as far as possible, the burdensome weight under which others were breaking. The example is not to be found in every word and act of a man, however great, but in the consistent purity of motive which lent a charm to deeds which, issuing from another fount, could only have been looked upon with unequivocal detestation. We must learn to admire real greatness in heroes, and leave off foolishly looking up to fallible men as perfect patterns after whom we are to copy in all things.

It is reported of this same Buddha that in one of his lives preceding his latest incarnation, when on his travels, he met a starving tigress surrounded by a brood of famishing cubs. Her breasts were dry, her bones had almost pierced her skin; he could have escaped with his life and let her and her little ones perish, but his love, even for a beast, was so great that he let her devour him, and thus, according to the belief of those who believe in the transmigration of souls, he prepared himself for a higher existence when next he appeared on earth. The example set by such a legend is not one we could advise anybody to follow, as, if there is ever a tie between human and animal life, surely the lower should be sacrificed in preference to the higher. If a burglar invades a man's house in the dead of night, when his wife and children are securely sleeping, and the only way to protect them as well as himself is for him to shoot the marauder, the act can scarcely be called a murderous deed, as it is a deed performed to save several lives from destruction.

We should not ourselves advocate such utter disregard of the instinct of self-preservation as that manifested by some who would allow others to ride over them without offering any resistance; but save in extreme cases we most emphatically express our sincere and ineradi-

cable conviction that to the loving, the gentle, the docile, the unresisting, belong the victor's crown and palm. Let us try to be humble, gentle, and above all, pure in spirit, and then will our conduct to friend and foe alike be a living exposition of that divine love, the lack of which in modern society makes everybody afraid of his neighbor, and causes the expenditure of money, time and strength in the erection and support of jails and penitentiaries—forces which, in the coming kingdom of heaven on earth, will be utilized practically in inducing

and maintaining a social state in which crime will not exist, as men obey gladly the laws they have learned to love.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Those whose spirits are pure and loving, destitute of pride, those who love truth supremely, and their neighbors as themselves, have here and now established and entered into a kingdom of heaven, and for them the death of the body, whenever it occurs, will mean nothing more dreadful than freedom to enjoy a well-merited kingdom.

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Delivered Sunday, Feb. 5th, 1882.

No. 24—Easier for a Camel to go Through the Eye of a Needle than for a Rich Man to Enter the Kingdom of God.

Delivered Sunday, March 5th, 1882.

No. 25—The Sermon on the Mount, and its Ethical Teaching.

PART I.

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THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, AND ITS ETHICAL TEACHING.

PART II.—DO WE ALWAYS RECEIVE OUR JUST DESERTS?

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED THROUGH THE MEDIAL INSTRUMENTALITY OF

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MASS., 1882.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."—*Matt. v: 4-5.*

Last Sunday in our discourse on the first Beatitude we spoke more particularly of the general and intrinsic value of the teachings attributed to Jesus than upon anything else. As we proposed considering these teachings and their relation to daily life on successive Sundays for a few weeks, we felt it our duty to impress upon the minds of our auditors a clear idea of the light in which we regarded them. Reiteration to-day is purposeless, as the majority of those now present heard our address last Sunday. We shall, therefore, say nothing of any moment now upon the teachings of Christ generically, but address ourselves at once to a consideration of those specific utterances which we have selected as the topic of our present remarks.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," suggested to our minds the thought of heaven as here present with us on earth, as well as millions of miles distant, in some far-off part of the universe. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven, is no ambiguous or even promissory or prophetic statement. When we say that something is here at the present time, we ought to ask no one to trust our veracity or to take any of our statements for granted if he be not destitute of ordinary powers and means of observation. The truth or falsity of such a declaration must be proved or disproved by an appeal to fact. Does the experience of the race testify to the correctness or incorrectness of the assertion; observe facts and form theories accordingly. The poor in spirit may be divided into two great classes: the cowardly

and the humble; the first class seem in no way entitled to happiness on account of destitution, of self-respect and vigorous ability to combat error. The cowardly are living in a condition of perpetual fear. The weak and irresolute are seldom happy; to such as these no kingdom of heaven seems to have come, at least as yet, as the condition of those who have too little pluck to fight, who are harmless simply because they have neither the strength nor the will to be aggressive, is far more closely allied to our ideas of hell than to our conceptions of heaven.

But what of the humble, the docile, the unassuming, those who are ever ready to sacrifice self for the good of others? Have these no peace, no joy beyond the comprehension of the jealous and selfish multitude which ridicules and despises them? Those who are lowliest in their own eyes, those who have the least arrogance, and are the most ready to credit their neighbors with superior attainment, are ever not only the happiest, but also the most proficient members of a society. Ignorance and pride, knowledge and humility, always appear as married pairs. Ignorance does not disturb pride; it has no extended horizon; it knows nothing of unexplored countries, nothing of the vast ocean of undiscovered truth.

An ignoramus may aptly be likened to a little insect, born upon a single leaf of a forest tree. His powers of observation do not extend beyond the leaf which forms his home; he has no idea of the vastness of the forest, of which even the tree, of which his leaf is an insignificant part, is only an infinitesimal portion. Born upon the leaf, dwelling upon it, it is his all, his universe; outside of it he can imagine nothing. The wise may be likened unto a bird or an ani-

mal endowed with large soaring or roaming powers. Far less limited than the tiny creature to whom we have just alluded, the superior means of research and travel afforded to the larger and freer creatures, teach them of the boundless expanse in which they are unable to move. They can move so far and no farther, so much farther than the insect that they can discern the faint outline of boundless oceans and continents, which their feebleness forbids them to navigate or explore. The vision of the beyond is to them a direct and humiliating revelation of their own weakness and ignorance. They cannot learn without realizing that knowledge is infinite; they cannot move without perceiving that space is limitless. Realizing the smallness of their knowledge, contrasting it with the immensities of infinity, they can only acknowledge to themselves how little they know.

The ancients, as a mass of people (not counting the few exceptionally wise and clear sighted ones who were the prophets and literati of old), had solved the problem of the universe to their own complete satisfaction. The earth was the centre of being; outside of it there were no worlds. Suns, stars, planets and moons could only be its accessories and dependents; every orb that glistens in the sky shone to give light to this little world, and had no other mission. Heaven was on the earth, in some fair beauteous realm where flowers and birds and all delights were undying; hell was in its bowels. Beyond earth there was nothing for man; beyond terrestrial life there was no life. These deductions, drawn from immediate and inevitable observation of nature's phenomena, were common-sense views of the universe. No one could blame or deride the forefathers for logically arriving at results so inevitable; but when uncommon sense discovered, by the aid of instruments, answering unto and registering the further unfoldment of latent human genius, that things were altogether otherwise—that the world we had thought our all, that the globe we had imagined to be the great centre of being, was only a little satellite revolving around a sun many thousands of times greater than itself; that the pretty little lamps hung up in heaven at night were, many of them, blazing and rolling spheres, vastly greater than this planet; that the earth was not stationary; that the sun neither rose nor set except in appearance; then came in the days of the confession of ignorance. Light breaks in; a portion of the hitherto unknown and unimagined reveals itself, and straightway there is no room for self-elation.

The boundless problem of universal life has only just outlined itself, and we have scarcely found a rule by which we can dare to endeavor to solve it. In every audience the most learned and thoughtful are the most attentive listeners.

The most intelligent minds are the most constantly on the alert for new information, while the ignorant are, as a rule, so conceited and self-satisfied that they know everything. Before you speak they can tell you more than you possibly can know of your subject, even though you have studied it a lifetime. The kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of knowledge; the kingdom of hell is the realm of ignorance. Socrates said wisely when he declared that the one great blessing needed to complete humanity was knowledge, which he characterized as the one great essential good; while the one terrible curse which held the world in the bondage of fear was ignorance, which he characterized as the source of all evil, even going so far as to say that it was in itself the great and only evil in the universe. According to the Socratic idea, God must be infinite wisdom, and the devil the entire absence of all wisdom; heaven must be the abode of the wise, and hell of the unwise.

This definition of good and evil, of heaven and hell, of God and the devil, is no unreasonable one, as it makes the positive element in all nature good, and the negative, evil. Good is, therefore, real, substantial, objective, permanent; while evil is unreal, unsubstantial, subjective, and transitory. Good is a perfectly rounded and harmonious sphere; evil is nebula, as yet unorganized into symmetrical form; primeval chaos, as yet unshaped into forms of beauty. There is, then, no absolute evil, no positive wrong; evil is conditional, wrong is the absence of harmony and nothing more. Our theory of the universe is that every atom composing it is indestructible, and constitutes a portion of the vast totality of being, which is, in its essence, essentially good. Malformations may be evil; the absence of certain needed elements or the presence in excess of other constituents may spoil or prevent the manifestation of goodness or beauty; no matter how beautiful and necessary things may be in themselves, we fail to perceive or appreciate their value unless they are so presented to us that they unite to form a harmonious whole. In music, harmony is everything; blended notes and strings must be so blended that they accord, or the finest instruments ever constructed will give forth hideous sounds. The child learning to play is like the soul experimenting with matter. The unitary spirit, the soul, enters into a vortex of contending forces when first it assumes an outward shape; it is ignorant of the laws which govern the structural organism it is destined to control. No matter how intelligent it may be inwardly; no matter how pure; purity and wisdom both alike lack expression. Raw materials, as it were, are given to the spirit just entering upon an earthly pilgrimage; these must be wrought into form, and as the pupil at the piano stumbles and

blunders unwittingly, even though doing his best, as the young artist daubs color upon his canvas, fails to give correct shading and produces general confusion, even while using only the best and positively needful brushes, colors and canvas for his work, so does the spirit experimenting with matter, learning to sway the outer forces of nature, falter and err at first, but eventually rises superior to every obstacle, overcomes every impediment, and assumes a ruling position by right.

To-day it appears that the meek, the lowly, the pure, the benevolent, do not inherit the earth. Tyrannical corporations and monopolies grind down the poor in abject mental and physical slavery; while the aggressive, the vicious, the utterly uncharitable, roll by in their splendid equipages on their way to and from the elegant mansions bought with the results of crime. How many there are who have gambled, to the ruin of many a happy family, whose representative has frequented the gaming table nightly and lost everything through the fascination of the all-too-enticing play, he losing all, while his wily opponent, taking every mean advantage of him, has eventually succeeded in effecting his downfall, who form part of the aristocracy of wealth, which is the curse of this country.

Take an extreme, though unhappily not so infrequent a case as many would fain imagine, in our large and pleasure-loving cities. A man marries a trusting and confiding wife, who becomes the mother of several beautiful children. He has a very happy and peaceful, though not an exciting home. For a while he and his wife and little ones are all in all to each other; he cares little for outside society; his home is his castle, his church, his heaven. But one day he meets some of his old companions; he invites them to his house to dinner. His wife's intuitions warn her of a coming disaster. She speaks to her spouse when they are alone together, diffidently and reluctantly, of her impressions. He remonstrates with her; tells her that she is nervous and unstrung; that she needs rest; a change; perhaps the counsel of a physician; and assures her that the friends of his against whom she fancies she has inwardly been warned in some mysterious way, are really among the best fellows in the world. She tries to be satisfied, but lies awake nearly all night; and during the snatches of sleep she redeems from wakefulness, her mind is troubled with horrible dreams. She sees all around her danger and eventual ruin; yea, even crime and death. She implores her husband to have nothing to do with these designing men. She uses every possible affectionate remonstrance, and for a while partially and apparently succeeds. She has rather frightened him, and he is not a nervous man; neither is he an impressible medium,

or one ready to lend an ear to voices from the invisible world. He does try to follow her advice, even though he soon begins to laugh at her fears. He wishes to please her, and, as she has been a most devoted wife to him, and the best of mothers to their children, he is ready even to gratify her whims, if they are not too extravagant.

For awhile all goes well, quite well, until he again falls in with these same objectionable persons, and by them allows himself to be carried to the card table. The merry voices, the sparkling wine, the familiar cards, all exert their fascinating and subtle influence upon his too yielding nature. He used to play for small sums when quite a young man, and there can be no great harm in just having one game with a few old friends; and for the first few nights little real harm is accomplished seemingly; but beneath the surface seeds of coming destruction have been sprouting, until the day soon arrives when the force of habit has become too strong for him. He is dazzled with the prospect of becoming fabulously rich; he plays for high stakes, he risks all, loses all, commits suicide in his desperation, and leaves a wife and young family utterly alone and penniless in the great world. Where has his money gone? for whom have home and family, and his own life also, been thus cruelly sacrificed? For those wolves in sheep's clothing who, under the guise of friendship, have exerted their every art, have laid their every plot to steal from the man they professed to highly regard, everything which made life enjoyable, or, in his case, even possible.

Now when we gaze with saddened mind and tearful eyes upon so pitiable a spectacle of hopeless misery, are we not led to doubt the existence of any spirit of justice in the laws of nature? Can we see here anything other than the working of either a remorseless fate or a belligerent spirit of spite? Can we not find in such distressful scenes either blind force or a vindictive devil, but no God, no pitying angels, no watchful and merciful spirits of friends departed, lingering lovingly around their friends on earth, to shield them from danger? In so aggravated a case as this we are confronted with the great mystery of life; the punishment on earth of the innocent in the stead of the guilty. Vicarious suffering here confronts us as a stern fact, demonstrated in the nineteenth century before our very eyes; for even though cool, calculating and unsympathetic philosophers should say that the ruined man ought to have heeded his wife's counsel and refused to allow himself to be entrapped, no one can utter a word in defense of the punishment which falls upon the innocent woman and children, who were in no sense partakers in the wrong. How can their undeserved sufferings be accounted

for, if there be, as we positively assert that there is, a perfectly just and loving deity, whose motions of intelligence are made manifest in the laws of being?

If this life be the only life, there is no possible vindication of the divine justice. The universe is ruled by a capricious fiend, either intelligent or non-intelligent. We are sorry to say anything against the opinions of our opponents which may wound their feelings or arouse their animosity; but sincere conviction compels us to assert that if you are not Theists, and do not believe in a good God, you must believe in a personal or impersonal, a conscious or unconscious devil. The churchman personifies this devil, and gives into his keeping at least the half of all human souls. The Atheist does not admit that this fiend is conscious and personal, but tacitly and inevitably admits the existence of such a power by refusing to see the opposite of the devil in a positively good God. We affirm, and challenge all possible contradiction of our affirmation, that if the death of the body ends all, the existence of either a blind or intelligent devil is proved; for the laws of nature allowing such a catastrophe to overtake the innocent as the not uncommon one to which we have alluded, are essentially diabolical unless there be such a law of compensation as the materialistic theory of the universe allows no possible room for.

But, say our atheistic brethren to us, what have you to offer to offset the conclusion at which we have logically arrived, simply witnessing the phenomena of Nature and allowing them to speak for themselves in spite of your belief in God and heaven? You cannot deny that these things exist on earth, and how can they exist anywhere, if such a God as yours, a being of perfect love and wisdom, rules supreme in all Nature? Surely you cannot ask us to believe that the laws of Nature are entirely different in one part of the universe to what they are in another; for you believe in the unity of God as much as we do in the unity of law, only you Theists believe that mind is the cause of law, and we Atheists believe that mind is the effect of law.

Our answer is this: That in spheres beyond the bounds of the earthly horizon, multitudes of bright and happy spirits are to be found, who have, at least to a very large extent, satisfactorily solved the great mysterious problem of human suffering. These assure us, they have assured men in all ages, that they absolutely know that without their earthly trials they would never have been fitted for the exalted homes in which they now dwell in a state of perpetual joy. There in those higher homes, of which the poet, the painter, the inspired teacher alike speak, and unto which all human hearts turn ever with unspeakable yearning,

the spirit is endowed with powers of retrospection quite unknown on earth. In the clearer atmosphere of those upper skies the mind is not befogged as it is on earth. Reminiscences of past experiences are neither faint nor few, but the soul realizes itself in its true relation to the great universe of conscious being, and perceives clearly that every conceivable trial and suffering must come in some form, sooner or later, to every child of God; that nature deals equally and equitably with all, and that while some are crushed in a moment beneath the weight of insupportable sorrows, others, who escape these tremendous woes, have to drink of the cup of diluted pain even to the very dregs.

No soul escapes the discipline of life; no heart ever loves truly and satisfactorily until it has been broken, that its contents may be outpoured. Some there are who, like unto the Christ on Calvary, suffer in a few short hours the agonies of many lifetimes. But with what result? Those who have thus acutely suffered can the soonest exclaim, with confident assurance: "It is finished." Those who can make the words of Jesus their own on their deathbeds, are those who, like him, have been tried and tempted at every point, and have been made perfect through the things they have suffered. "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" an expression of desolation indescribable, of heartrending agony, soon changes into the glad and peaceful expression of trust, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

The tragedy of Good Friday must, in every human life, precede the resurrection glory of a glad Easter morning. Those who complain the most bitterly of the woes of life, and who are loudest in their denunciations of what they call universal injustice, are those who, as a rule, have suffered least and done least to relieve suffering. We have always heard, and always expect to hear, the bitterest complaints falling from the lips of those who have really, in a worldly sense, the least reason to complain. These persons have never undergone the discipline of sorrow; they have never been mellowed and opened up and sweetened by it; therefore they are hard, cynical, and unloving. If we never suffered we should be in a moral sense like pure white, glistening icebergs, shining in freezing isolation in a frozen ocean. Beautiful, pure, gorgeous, elevated we might be, but never having felt the need of sympathy, we should never have given and never accepted any. We should live entirely on the outside of life, admiring personal beauty and intellectual endowment, but knowing positively nothing of the depths of the affections which lie hidden in the inmost breasts of those around us.

Why do we suffer? We suffer that we may

develop the power to enjoy; and if we never suffer we never can enjoy. We are journeying, each one of us, toward worlds of life in which everything is beautiful. Exquisite pleasure is to be derived from all around. The amount of pleasure we individually receive is graded upon the amount of suffering which has rendered us sensitive to surroundings.

Observe the facts of life, and take an illustration of our meaning. The law of compensation exhibits itself in this wise: a blind man never sees anything to grieve or annoy him; he never sees anything to please or rejoice him. A deaf man listens to no beautiful melodies; he never hears a single sound that can distress him. A man destitute of the sense of smell never perceives the fragrance of a flower; he is never annoyed with a disagreeable odor. An obtuse person is too blunt to take an insult or interpret an unkind insinuation; he is equally impervious to all the overtures of kindness. One who is too blunt to suffer is too blunt to enjoy; the intensity of the power to suffer is the measure of the intensity of possible enjoyment.

Let us follow the poor woman of whom we have spoken into the spiritual life and ascertain her condition there. She is infinitely more capable of perceiving and enjoying life than she would be if she had walked on roses all through her earthly life. She perceives clearly that a blow fell upon her in a moment which gave her in concentrated essence of immediate misery an experience which she must have, but which might otherwise have extended over centuries of time, and occupied many lives. Like the heroine in Adelaide Proctor's story of a faithful soul, one thousand years, as angels count time, were passed over in a single moment of suffering on earth. Though clothed in the imagery of Roman Catholicism, Miss Proctor has most clearly and beautifully explained the absence of a sense of revolving years in the spiritual life. A soul needs a discipline which ordinarily extends through one thousand years of earthly time. It is a discipline, however, which can be passed through in another way. Her heart must be completely broken in a moment; as the weight of the entire experience falls at once upon her it falls in one dread blow. She is crushed, all is lost; the discipline is over; she sadly retraces her steps to purgatory, but purgatory is gone; for her there remains only heaven. Even the machinations of the wicked are overruled for highest good, for even though the innocent fall a prey to them, remember that innocence and wisdom fully blent, alone express the state of the rounded soul.

The days are coming when this earth in its meridian splendor shall be under the complete sway of those who have suffered and gained their then present spiritual altitudes upon it. There is profound truth and depth of meaning

in the words addressed by Jesus to his twelve disciples: "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "Be thou faithful over a few things, and I will make thee ruler over many things." The Christ is here the representative of retributive justice. Suffer anywhere innocently, and in a good cause, and there you will find yourself the ruler, while your victimizer will be your servant. Every one who has ever wronged you will, for his own good, find himself incarcerated in a prison, fashioned of the wrongs he leveled at you. Out of that wretched cave he cannot rise until you, the injured one, stretch forth your hand and liberate him. You must be the forgiving spirit who alone can restore the offender against yourself. In the spirit-life your joy will consist in transforming enemies into friends. As you lift the pall of misery from those who have wronged you bitterly, you will find that through the elevation of your enemies you yourselves rise to highest bliss.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." We repeat these words, laying special stress upon the last one of them, "*earth*." Is not this beatitude foundationless? Is it not entirely contradicted by the stern facts of life? Admitting that this present life is the only life, the beatitude is sometimes proved true, but quite as often does it prove itself false. We all know how much of the earth is now in the hands of landed proprietors whose ancestral domains were pillaged from the rightful possessors or holders centuries ago. We know that the title to an estate has frequently originated in naught save force and fraud; the meek have been ejected, while the aggressive invaders have lain claim to the territory.

Looking at matters from the materialistic point of view, the meek are those who very seldom attain to the possession of the wealth of this world. But materialistic inferences are based upon observations and calculations as radically incomplete and erroneous as were the astronomical observations and calculations of astronomers of the Ptolemaic school. The error in both of these schools is identical: both make the earth the centre of the universe, both confine their attention to appearances and immediate results. Human spirits do not leave the earth as soon as they quit the physical body; they hover around it, and continue to dwell upon it until such time as they are ready to leave it for a higher state of being, then, having connected themselves with more advanced orbs, if they return to earth it is only as celestial messengers, or inspiring spirits, yearning to enlighten and bless the humanity they love, and with which they are eternally united.

The tyrants of the earth possess it, only in seeming however, during their sojourn in those bodies through which they apparently control

it. Where is the ruler to-day who represents autocracy who feels safe while seated on his throne? What of the monarchs of Europe? In Russia, in Germany, in England, constant conspiracies against the powers that be, attempts upon the life of the sovereign, render a royal life a most harassing and unhappy one. What of the powers ecclesiastical? How is it with the Pope of Rome? Despoiled of civic authority he is scarcely other than a prisoner. In his splendid palace, the Vatican, he feels that his name and person and office are alike execrated by the multitudinous followers of Garibaldi, and other Italian patriots. The absence of affection felt by the people for kings and nobles is to all rulers the greatest source of danger. Kings and priests can rule an uneducated throng, but give the populace the advantages of secular instruction, allow them to become men and women in reality, in independence of spirit, as well as in name, and the lovers of humanity, those who endear themselves to their subjects, become and remain the only enduring potentates. In spirit-life government exists—there is a perfect governmental system—but coercion and striving for place and power are alike futile. Enter the unseen world and your rank among immortals is decided immediately by your attainments and moral status. In the invisible realm, uncloaked, revealed to yourself and your neighbors, you stand or fall solely upon the basis of merit. When death overtakes you you have lost every fictitious prop; you have no arm of flesh left you to lean upon; you cannot any longer ride to your victory over the downfall of your victims; you are like birds left free to soar in the air. Those who have borne the trials of life bravely, and have struggled to do their utmost for their fellowmen, are like unfettered eagles; they can and do soar to their eyries in the fastnesses of the highest rocks. Those who have lived for self only, for the gratification of pride, for sensual gratification, who have denuded their brethren of their rightful belongings, find themselves with blinded eyes, with deaf ears, with clipped wings, in the unseen life. If you have ever wronged another on earth, if an innocent person has ever been at your mercy and you have taken a mean advantage of his weakness, the time will come when you will yourself be at the mercy of others to fully as great an extent, and you will probably need the experience of becoming the sufferer ere you will develop within you the love of justice which causes you to have no desire to wrong any one. So soon as you are perfectly freed from all unkind and unjust thoughts, so soon as you have risen entirely above the sphere in which malice is possible, you will be able to control the forces around you, and will have become impervious to the attack of every possible enemy.

Do we all receive our just deserts? Is all the misery in the world necessary to human advancement? Are all wrongs but stepping-stones to right? Is all sin a portion of the divine plan of evolution? Difficult questions these, needing depth of profundity rarely possessed by teachers to answer; but, nevertheless, questions clamoring every hour for replies, questions demanding answers from those whose mission it is to reveal, so far as may be, the divine justice to humanity. We know that very grave exception may be taken to the doctrine of necessity; we know that those who believe in the freedom of the human will have the evidence of the moral sense on their side; we know that such a doctrine as that advocated by the late revered A. B. Child, "Whatever is, is right," is not a doctrine which all intelligent and moral persons are prepared to receive, and yet, in a large and true sense, whatever is, *must* be right.

The religious world is divided into two great schools of thinkers: the Fatalists, among whom Mahometans and Calvinists stand conspicuous, and Believers in Free Will, prominent among whom are the Christians of all shades of belief who are inimical to the Calvinistic tenet of Predestination. It has been wisely remarked by a great religious thinker, that Necessity and Free Will are like two sides of an arch, both sides of which are partially visible on earth, but they meet beyond the clouds, far above the range of human vision. To offer an explanation of the difficulty from our point of view, to fortify our assertion by an appeal to the facts of life as they have been revealed to us, will be our duty ere we close our remarks this morning. We will ask you to consider for a moment the vast difference between positive and negative goodness. Without the ability to sin, there would be no ability to do right consciously and willingly. If sin were outside of the experiences of human existence, then we should possibly be innocent, pure as the new-born babe, as innocent of wrong as the fair white lily; but this innocent purity would be simply infantile, it would be the state of souls who have not yet left the paradisiacal homes in which unembodied spirits exist, not knowing the difference between good and evil. The allegory in Genesis is a clever attempt of the Oriental mind to solve the problem of the existence of evil. Adam and Eve, naked and unfallen, represent the soul in its pristine state of innocence. The serpent represents the powers of the physical universe. Eve is the symbol of the affections, and of the thirst for knowledge. Adam figures as a type of reason; the serpent seduces Eve; the seductive power of matter and the curiosity to know more of the universe develop within the soul the desire for an earthly life. The affections and desires directed downward toward earth allure

the just awakened intellect to consent to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Paradise is forfeited; for a while the soul must travel through terrestrial orbs, until, finally perfected by discipline and sorrow, it regains a lost paradise only to discover therein treasures infinitely greater and more precious than those which the spirit lost when it decided to make an earthward pilgrimage.

When the curtain of materiality is withdrawn you will realize, all of you, that you were not embodied by chance; that the laws of being led you to take the earthward step, and that previous to your birth into matter it was revealed unto you all that earthly embodiment signified and involved. The expression of human intelligence through the body is very faint; memory is often imperfect and confused; but the time will come when, in the brighter light of a clearer day, each one of you will behold face to face, in the mirror of a celestial atmosphere, the unclouded reflection of the face of a spotless and perfect divine justice, which is the soul of law, the guiding and indwelling spirit of all nature. Would it not be contrary to every idea of justice to endorse the theory advocated by many, that some can enter heaven through a broad and flowery gateway bedecked with jewels, while others have to climb along the road to the celestial city through sloughs of despond and over hills of difficulty? Bunyan's pilgrim is a type of every soul if of one; and while the details of the journey may vary with separate individuals, the great journey itself has to be taken in its entirety by all.

In a spiritual as in a material sense we cannot be overtaken by and compelled to yield to any tempters who, when coming to us, find nothing in us. Let a perfectly healthy person, one destitute of fear and disease alike, enter the fever ward of a hospital, and he is safe. When epidemics rage, strong and apparently perfectly healthy men are often the first to succumb to the ravages of the disorder, while slender, fragile women escape unharmed, even though they attend, by day and by night, upon sufferers whose disease is of the most virulent order. If there be within you a tendency to the disorder; if there be impurity of the blood, then very often the development of the disease is the surest way to the purification and development of the system. How many there are who declare that had they never passed through a severe illness they would never have been what they are, spiritually, intellectually or physically. Illness and pain of every description are disagreeable while we are suffering, but after the pain is over we find ourselves the stronger and the happier for the experience. The history of the development of the earth, as written by the most eminent of geologists, is the histo-

ry of the progress of the soul. Volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, cyclones, terrific storms of thunder and hail, vast inundations—all these terrific agencies have been at work to transform primeval chaos into order and beauty. The elements of the earth have composed the globe from the commencement of its career as a nebulous planet. The atoms have changed places many times; they have not left the earth, they are still a part of it. The atoms of the physical universe in one form constitute a deadly Upas-tree, a huge and venomous snake, or a noxious insect; newly arranged, they form the bodies of happy human beings, delicious fruits and flowers, and sweet singing birds. The powers of human nature are the powers of the universe, only limited in extent. The evil and trouble which to-day we bemoan are only expressions of Nature's universal energy, forming for itself an appropriate shrine. Every soul must pass through every stage in the evolutionary march; the only question is in what particular form shall the temptations of life approach you individually.

Many of you will doubtless here and now fail to discern the necessity for the trials you undergo; but in other higher and happier lives you will see clearly that you never suffered but for your own good. Nature is a great economist, and therefore makes the most use of everything; so if more persons than one receive a discipline at one time, and through the same occurrence, we need not be surprised. You will say, perchance, that you have been robbed, and that you never stole anything and never wished to. Granted that this is so, our philosophy assures us that you could not be robbed unless you had not as yet undergone the temptation to dishonesty and fully overcome it. Dishonesty exists in a multitude of forms. Frequently the poor beggar who steals a loaf to ward off starvation is designated a thief by society, while the calumniator who robs his brethren of the good name which Shakespeare rightfully says is more valuable than any amount of money, is looked upon by the outwardly virtuous as a pattern of morality. Unto some of you the temptation may come to steal perishable goods; unto others the trial may come in some altogether interior form. So soon as you have completely overcome it, and have developed positive honesty, you cannot lose anything by the stealth or malice of another. A wise law governs all things. Persons are allowed to live out their natures; but those whom fate allows to be victimized, are those who yet need further discipline ere they can shine as fully rounded souls, having vanquished all the temptations of life.

Remember this, all ye who sorrow and are unjustly dealt with, that your trial, if not a punishment, is certainly a needed experience; and rest upon the glad assurance that just so

soon as you are truly "meek," in the highest acceptance of the word, all material things will be completely under the sway of your triumphal soul; and when you have suffered the endurance of every trial, you will be everlastingly comforted with the knowledge that all your sorrows have resulted in your own and others' higher development.

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